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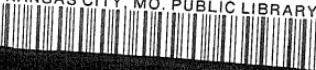
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## RENASCENT MEXICO



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# Renascent Mexico

*Edited by* HUBERT HERRING  
*and* HERBERT WEINSTOCK

INTRODUCTION BY ERNEST GRUENING

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WITH LATIN AMERICA

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## FOREWORD

THE chapters comprising *Renaissance Mexico* are an out-growth of the annual Seminar conducted in Mexico by the Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America. The success of the Seminar during the ten years of its existence has been due to the generous co-operation of its many friends, including the contributors to this book. To them we express our sincerest gratitude.

Latin America is of increasing importance to the United States, culturally, ethically, and commercially. This is particularly true of Mexico, our nearest Latin American neighbor. It is by our relations with Mexico and Cuba that we are judged by the rest of Latin America. Peaceful and equitable relations depend upon understanding. It is the belief of the editors that *Renaissance Mexico*, like the Committee's Seminars, can contribute to the cause of lasting inter-American peace and good feeling by supplying accurate information and thoughtful interpretation.

HUBERT HERRING  
HERBERT WEINSTOCK

287 Fourth Avenue  
New York City  
February 26, 1935.



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## RENASCENT MEXICO



# INTRODUCTION: THE MEANING OF MEXICO

*by Ernest Gruening*

THE passage from Texas beyond the Rio Grande is startling with contrast. A painted landscape unfolds. Tilled fields yield to the illusion of desert. Frame houses are replaced by purplish adobe flamed with scarlet geranium pots. From the lavender haze of burning charcoal floating through the dark doorway, red-blanketed Indians, women in blue *rebozos*, and bronzed children gaze impassively at the steam and steel intruder. Across an infinite *mesa* of violet-shadowed *mesquite* swimming in golden sunlight, turquoise mountains lift the horizon into a luminous heaven. Here is a land of strange beauty and mystery. So much any tourist may see.

He may note other contrasts. The order and civic bustle, the swift-moving, mechanized patter of a modern society (maintained even after six years of arresting depression) give way to a simple, less regulated, earlier stage of development. Where all men wore trousers of nation-wide pattern, and women maintained uniformity of skirt-lengths and hosiery-shades, here tailor- and modiste-made clothes are vastly outnumbered by the male white pajama and blanket, the woman's shawl, and the bare or *guarache*-shod feet.

We travel southward, toward tropic warmth, upward

into compensating cool altitude, past imperially distant serrated ranges cutting amethyst facets into the lighter lilac of the horizontal sky. We become conscious of the three cosmic dimensions as never before. But there is still another dimension which subtly obtrudes itself. We are winging our way backward also, through the long reaches of the past, penetrating eras long forgotten by our own integrated and complex society. We are adventuring into history.

In Mexico, the Einsteinian theory of time as a fourth dimension assumes reality. This is the first of the treasures of discovery which the contemporary *conquistador* of neighborliness and understanding must uncover for himself. And the second is no less important: Mexico is an Indian land.

Let us consider them both—their origin and their significance. The Mexicans are preeminently an agricultural people. The clouds of *mesa*-dust which periodically envelop cities are symbolic of the predominance, testify to the intrusiveness, of land. It is coincidental and pertinent that for rural Mexicans the words "*mi tierra*" ("my land") connote what "home" and "country" do to us. In that "land" his roots have struck deep. The struggle for land and its fruits has been the age-long epic of the Mexican people. That was the battle of Toltec and Aztec. That was the unceasing ferment during four centuries of Hispanic feudal overlordship. That was the revolution of serf against *hacienda*. That is still the conflict of *peón* and *político*.

The Mexicans were probably the first agriculturists of

the western world. Thousands of years before the coming of the white men, before the return of the "Fair God" of Aztec legend, these migrants from Asia reached the great sun-drenched upland over which towered glistening volcanoes. Perhaps it was the might and majesty, their awesome beauty, perhaps the cool streams which those snowy deities released to fructify the brown earth, which bade the nomads, weary with long desert marches, pause. But here it was that these hunters turned to the soil. Here in time they built their villages, their cities, their great stone temples. Here they developed their religion, based on the propitiation of sky and earth, a faith little altered in purport or purpose by the Conquest. Successive waves of newcomers fought for this land. The survivors' descendants still till it. They are the same agricultural people that Cortés found, essentially unchanged in race, culture, and custom. Even their ancient speech survives—Nahua, the Aztec language on the *mesa central*; Tarascan to the west; Zapotec, Mixtec, and a half-dozen other tongues to the south; Maya in the southeast. They still work the soil as they have since the Conquest. The pointed stick of the pre-Columbian era persists here and there. Elsewhere the primitive wooden plow is dragged by oxen descended from cattle Cortés introduced, and the steel *machete*, which serves as spade and scythe, replaces the cruder copper and obsidian-bladed implements of Moctezuma's empire. For fertility, there are similar pagan rites (minus the human sacrifices) to placate the gods of rain, the same battles, often bloody, with neighboring villagers for the scant

trickle of an insufficient and intermittent stream. Extraction of food from soil is little changed athwart the centuries. Neither is the diet. The staples are those which Bernal Díaz del Castillo and the rest of that doughty band found for sale in the markets—as they are today—and tasted with astonishment and relish. Corn, America's great gift to its people; *chile*, the fiery pepper, red or green, which in the *tamal*, an ancient Aztec concoction, and in other dishes, gives Mexican cookery its peculiarly “hot” repute; tomatoes, beans, and that unique gift of the giant *maguey* of the *mesa*, the whitish beverage, *pulque*; in the low hot lands, chocolate, cinnamon, vanilla, *chicle*. Their preparation has varied little. The Aztec woman still grinds her maize on the ancient convex stone *metate*. From every *adobe* hut, the sound of the pat-a-pat of the *tortilla*, to be browned on the earthen *comal*, or griddle, over smoking charcoal—these are, as they have been since pre-history, the note, the fragrance, and the rhythm of Mexico. They endure even while far aloft a swift airplane wings from Mexico City to the border.

Modernity has belatedly begun its invasion, to be sure. Something of each of the last five centuries may often be seen at one time from a given spot. But the Mexico that Cortés and The Anonymous *Conquistador* and that most observant of ethnographers, Fr. Bernardino de Sahagún, described, is still on every hand. Except in the cities, the clothing and shelter are those of the pre-machine man who evolved them to meet the climatic requirements of his habitat. The male's blanket is still woven on hand-made

looms, with designs characteristic of region and tribe—brown, blues, and whites in the central region of Anahuac; more brightly colored in the region of the Laguna and among the Zapotecs and Chinantecs of the Oaxaca *sierra*. These blankets, which serve as garment by day and covering by night, are worn much as the pre-Cortesian *tilma*, draped over the shoulder or with the head thrust through a hole, *poncho*-fashion. As for the habitation, it is hand-built by the dwellers, of material found thereabouts. No cut lumber or finished woodwork, no nail or hinge, no plumbing or lighting of metal or glass wrought in factory, are found therein, but *adobe*-brick fashioned from the earth of the *mesa*, or (in the tropics) walls of palm-wattle and roofs of palm-leaf thatch. In food, clothing, and shelter, the continuity with the primitive before the coming of the European is largely unbroken.

So too, largely, with the commonest articles of constant service, the straw *petate* on which Mexicans sleep; the *ayate*, the *ixtle*-fiber net or its Hispanic adaptation, the *rebozo*, in which the Aztec woman of today carries her offspring, her produce, or her hand-made products; the more refined lacquered trays and boxes of Uruapan; the fine feather, horsehair, and bead trinkets; the carved leather, obsidian, and opal ornaments; the intricately wrought silver and gold jewelry—they are the lovingly fashioned creations of a race in an earlier stage of what we choose to call “development.” These gems of individuality and artistic worth are made for daily use. Small wonder that our tourists, seeking escape from the standardized

products of the machine, and the other concomitants of this power-driven age, here satisfy their nostalgia for a simpler, elsewhere long-since-vanished, era of handicraftsmanship. Europe's seventeenth and eighteenth century pieces may be found only in museum and antique shop. Mexico's (though they are made today!) are to be had in every market.

What is the reason for this alluring anachronism that Mexico represents? Its history reveals the answer to those who peer beyond the names and dates of *conquistador* and viceroy, of president and dictator, beneath the surface effervescence of official event and political ruction, into the deep stream of race and folk. In the evolution of mankind, the Amerind of Mexico—Mayas, Aztecs, Zapotecs, and the great variety of less advanced tribes—has reached a point which by anthropological standards was some centuries behind the development of the peoples bordering the Mediterranean, yet far ahead of that of the redmen of northern North America. The Mexican Indians had attained their considerable culture without fecundating contacts with other cultures. What they achieved, they achieved alone and unaided. Their evolution was interrupted by the Conquest. The *conquistadores* destroyed the native brains and emerging intellectual leadership. But they did not destroy—they merely enslaved—the vast population which they found. For four centuries, its own development was held in suspense. Now the mold which the Spanish Conquest cast about the Mexicans has been broken—broken not by the socially and economically meaningless political severance

from Spain in 1820, called "independence," but by the revolution of 1910. The spontaneous evolution that was proceeding before the Conquest is being resumed. It is modified, of course, tremendously by what the Spaniards brought. It is to be affected still further by the impact of the outside world, the world of invention and modern industry. It is out of this conglomerate in the continent's oldest crucible that a new people and a new nation are being forged from America's most ancient race.

It is the Indian who is emerging. It is the Indian, of the blood and brain of the builders of the great pyramids of Chichen-Itzá and Teotihuacán, and of hundreds of other great architectural memorials of an ancient race and an exuberant epoch, who is coming back into his own. In Mexico, the Amerind is recovering his lost patrimony, his long-conquered fatherland. The "vanishing redskin" of these United States is the sinew of the Mexico of today and tomorrow. After four centuries of alien and absentee rule, one of the great race-stocks of this planet, whose extinction has been taken for granted, is, on the contrary, re-establishing itself. It is an unprecedented turn of events after four centuries of retreat.

I may be charged with oversimplification—and perhaps justly. Spain imposed her language, a code of laws, her political habits, and—with the labor of the Indians—created architectural monuments of enduring strength and unique beauty. But the conversion of these Colonial edifices to other use is both symbolic and symptomatic of the rising tide of Indianism. The content of Mexico, its people, re-

mains Indian, and is becoming more so. Barring the unexpected, the infinitely small percentage of pure whites will be bred out in another century. The abolition of the caste system, which persisted through three centuries of Spanish Colonial rule, and through a century of continuing feudalism under political independence, will speed the racial amalgamation. Approximately a third of Mexicans today are pure Indian. The remainder, excepting the small percentage of whites, are mixed-bloods, and among them the Indian strain, constantly replenished from the reservoir of darker full-bloods, is deepening.

The implications, from the standpoint of a neighboring country which only now and belatedly recognizes the injustice and unwisdom of its own treatment of its natives, are considerable. We are to live side by side with a nation of original Americans. Their innate qualities, the values which they can give to mankind, so tangible today in their folkways and beautiful handicrafts, assets so long neglected and rejected by us, are being preserved by them themselves, developed and strengthened. It is a striking fact that while peoples more different, presenting more contrast than between us who call ourselves Americans and they who are Americans, exist on earth today, nowhere else do they exist thus side by side.

The re-emergence of Mexico has been precipitated by a moderate social revolution, which after ten years of turmoil and chaos following 1910 has, for a decade and a half, become evolutionary. This is itself the evidence of its moderation—and perhaps of its incompleteness, since “The

Revolution," as it is known in Mexico, aimed to liquidate the encrusted abuses of many centuries. Its incompleteness is admittedly part of the national ideology; public officials continue to speak of their regime and of themselves as having "emanated from the Revolution." Some of the anachronisms are being eliminated, others persist. It is not necessary to do more than suggest them here. The feudal land-tenure, which the *conquistadores* established four centuries ago, continued unbroken until 1910. The century after "independence" brought no change in the existing caste system, and large landholding and serfdom became aggravated. The agrarian reform is the most important social and economic aspect of the revolution, and, despite shortcomings, its most notable achievement. Concomitantly with a new freedom for the agricultural toilers, enlightened labor legislation gives the industrial workers a security which is not enjoyed elsewhere in this hemisphere.

The long exploitation of Mexico by the foreigner—first the Spaniard, then the foreign concessionnaire—has resulted not merely in a sweeping conservation program, but in a swing-back to an intense economic nationalism. The religious conflict is likewise the continuation of a long war between church and state, in which the pendulum has swung far, from one extreme of intolerance on the part of the clergy three-quarters of a century ago, to a corresponding official intolerance today. The long debasement of the Indian serfs is yielding to popular education, based on the nation's peculiar needs—a cultural nationalism.

We have, also, therefore, in its most ancient setting, the

hemisphere's most advanced social ferment. From neolithic to power age, from sun-dance to sympathetic strike, from local tribal communal landholding to a Six-Year Plan for a national economy—Mexico presents the gamut of human endeavor through every age. Therein lies its uniqueness, meaning, and interest for those who dwell in these forty-eight States.

# THE KEY TO THE MEXICAN CHAOS

*by Luis Cabrera*

THE purpose of the Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America is, as its name indicates, to achieve the best relations possible between the people of the United States and the peoples of Latin America. To say "the best relations" is to say better understanding, and implies the necessity of knowing well each of the countries with which better relations are desired. The concrete aim of this book is, then, to contribute to the understanding of Mexico, to knowledge concerning the Mexican territory, the Mexican people, and the Mexican problems.

The Mexican territory—but which territory? The City of Mexico, well-paved and in a fever of reconstruction and modernization? The surroundings of the City? Cuernavaca, Puebla, Toluca, and Pachuca, all connected by excellent roads and by bus-lines very little different from those of the United States? Or the Mexican territory in its immense sterility and poverty, and the isolation of some of its regions from others?

The Mexican people. But which people? Those who, like the readers of this book, have had a school education, who read and think similarly? Or the millions of Indians and people of the land, who do not even speak Spanish, and who live almost like animals?

The Mexican problems. But which problems? Those of the urban population? Those of the proletariat? Or those our history has overlooked as a consequence of the brutality of the Conquest, the apathy of the Spanish kings, or the ambitions of corrupt dictators?

When we speak of the Mexican territory, our first thought is of the diversity of the regions into which our country is naturally divided by the great mountain system which, bifurcating itself toward the north, leaves the coasts of the Gulf and the Pacific isolated on either side, and the Central and Northern Mesas in its interior angle. Our country was badly endowed by nature, from physical and hydrographic point-of-view. This gigantic mountain system isolates the sections of the country, and the extensive plateau deprives it of streams for communication and irrigation.

As a consequence Mexico is broken up into parts totally foreign to each other: the Central Mesa, most favored by nature, and most thickly populated; the Northern Mesas, generally arid, except for the two centers of Torreón and Saltillo; the Pacific slope, rich, but cut off from the Central Mesa by an almost unconquerable mountain system; the Gulf slope, rich, but unhealthy; the mountainous region of the South, consisting of the States of Michoacán, Guerrero, Oaxaca, and Chiapas; the Southeast, consisting of the States of Yucatán, Campeche, and Tabasco; and the long tongue of arid and unpopulated territory of Lower California, cut off from the rest of the country by the Gulf of California and the Great Desert of Sonora.

It is not strange that these regions have developed almost independent civilizations, and that they have nothing in common but language, and that only among that part of the population to which Spanish has penetrated.

The principal problem in a country like this lies, therefore, in ways of communication, as the only means of unifying the territory. Since before the Revolution, the chief effort towards this unity has been the construction of railroads. But, as is well known, the program of the building of these lines obeyed the American necessity of linking the Central and Northern plateaus with the United States, rather than that of connecting the separate sections of Mexico. Such were the two principal systems of railways—the Central and the National.

The Mexican and Interoceanic Railways, as well as other, smaller lines, fulfil a similar need, that of linking the center of the country with the principal Gulf and Pacific ports. The Tehuantepec line itself was not constructed with national aims, but to provide transportation for foreign products. The transverse lines, such as the one from Monterrey to Torreón, though they served the national economy better, always had the character of tributaries to the trunk lines to ports and frontiers.

The capital with which these railroads were built was almost entirely foreign—English, French, or American—and consequently the management of these lines was in foreign hands during the whole epoch of Díaz. The consolidation into the National Lines theoretically put the control of the railroads into Mexican hands—except for

the Mexican and Southern Pacific lines—but it did not Mexicanize the service, which continued to serve importation and exportation with a largely foreign personnel.

The Revolution destroyed large sections of right-of-way, and considerably disorganized the service, but the control of the lines, first for military reasons, and later for economic ones, brought a degree of Mexicanization of them. It can be said that, despite the disorder and bad management, and despite the corruption in the administration of the National Lines, there has been an advance towards their nationalization. The Revolution also built the branch line from Canitas to Durango, completing the transverse system of the North. Later, during Obregón's presidency, the Southern Pacific line was completed, uniting it with the National Lines, a work which, while it formed a third line of suction from our railway system, also united the States of Sonora, Sinaloa, and Nayarit to the center of the country. There remains the need to unite Yucatán, Campeche, and Tabasco to it by rail, a work of vital importance to Mexico, one not yet even begun.

In the matter of navigation, the revolutionary politics have failed completely, for, far from taking control of the Pacific and Gulf lines, it has abandoned and destroyed them to a point where it can be said that the coastal service of the Mexican ports does not exist. The Revolution found Salina Cruz, Coatzacoalcos, Frontera, and Tampico ready to be used. Now they are neglected to such an extent that Salina Cruz and Frontera are, for all

practical purposes, entirely closed. The system of free ports fell victim of bureaucracy.

The development of the automobile has converted the road into the most important factor in Mexico's transformation. It is incredible what the roads and the automobile have accomplished in recent years in bringing the inhabitants of the country nearer. The cheap automobile has opened up the regional roads and taken advantage of the trunk highways, to a point where it may be said that for each kilometer of highway constructed by the government there are ten kilometers of local road opened through the initiative of individuals.

The general scheme of trunk highways falls into the same error as that of the railways. That from Mexico City to Laredo and the projected one from Nogales to Suchiate are absurd, for instead of contributing to the development of the country, they will facilitate imperialist penetration and the absorption of natural resources and our feeble national commerce. The future policy in regard to highways should be toward the development of transverse roads and local roads radiating from the centers already connected, with the aim of uniting Mexicans among themselves. International tourism does not have as many benefits as are generally attributed to it. If it is one opportunity our country fully realizes, it is as well an opportunity for imperialist temptations. What we need more to develop is national tourism, which makes us know each other, brings us closer together, links us economically, and breaks the chains of mountains which isolate us.

The diversity of sections in our country has been aggravated still more by the political division into states following absolutely no plan, being more the topographic result of the territorial grants made to the *conquistadores* in the Colonial period and those made to colonists who came to establish themselves in Mexico. We have too many political entities, too many states. Each political division has given origin to new isolations, and has raised new barriers between the states, equal to those in Europe after the War. In reality, Mexico could be well governed if it were divided into ten or twelve political entities whose boundaries corresponded to natural physiographic frontiers, instead of being divided into thirty, some of which—like Aguascalientes, Tlaxcala, Colima, and Nayarit—are not large enough for the theoretical form of autonomous government they have. In short, the Mexican territory lacks homogeneity, and the diverse fractions which compose it do not work among themselves under a system of co-ordination.

The problem of the diversity of languages in Mexico is less complex than is generally believed, but not less serious. It is not necessary to list in detail all the languages and dialects still spoken in Mexico, as is often done in such an exaggerated form as to perplex foreigners, who could believe that Mexico is a Tower of Babel. There do still exist in Mexico a large number of indigenous idioms and dialects which were spoken at the time of the Conquest. Orozco y Berra, in his famous book, *The Geography of the Languages of Mexico*, classifies the Indian languages

of Mexico into eleven families, and mentions thirty-five languages, sixty-nine dialects, and sixteen unclassified tongues, a total of 120 living languages, not counting sixty-two dialects already dead when Orozco y Berra was writing, in 1860.

The persistence of indigenous languages is due fundamentally to the deliberate purpose of not permitting the indigenous masses to speak Spanish. Until recently, there has been no attempt to substitute Spanish for them. On the contrary, the missionary would have been afraid of losing his influence over the indigenous population if he had taught it Spanish. He preferred to learn the Indian idioms in order to explain Christian doctrine and give catechism in Mexican, Tarascan, and even Otomí, thus preserving a prestige which he could easily have lost if he had spread the knowledge of Spanish. Sahagún himself, the great Sahagún, preferred, as a historian, to gather his material in Mexican rather than teach his students at Tlaltelolco to write Spanish.

The landholding *conquistador*, and later the landholder of the Colonial epoch and the *hacienda*-owner of the independent epoch, always was—and is—careful to speak to the *peones* and servants in their own idiom, thus preventing them from learning Spanish. In exactly the same way, during the Colonial epoch, the Indians were prohibited from riding horseback or using firearms. The preservation of indigenous idioms has been, then, a problem of domination.

Only in recent times has the Revolution produced a movement of the indigenous population which has given

the Indians in the army the opportunity to learn Spanish. Even then, it was not uncommon for military chiefs to form bodies of troops of one language and speak to them in it, as a means of preserving better control over them. General Obregón spoke Maya to his soldiers from Sonora, General Barrios in Totonac or Mexican to his boys from the Puebla mountains, and General Che Gómez in Zapotec to his Oaxacans.

To simplify the matter, we can say that the languages spoken in Mexico sufficiently to constitute a real problem for national progress are: Mexican (or Aztec or Nahuatl), spoken extensively in the Federal District and the States of Morelos, Puebla, Tlaxcala, Hidalgo, Vera Cruz, and Chiapas; Maya, spoken in Yucatán, Campeche, and Chiapas; Mixtecan and Zapotecan, spoken in Oaxaca; and Otomí, spoken in the States of Mexico, Hidalgo, and Querétaro.

Besides these fundamental tongues, there are others of secondary importance still widely spoken: Tarascan, in Michoacán; Totonac, in the mountains of Puebla and Vera Cruz; Huastecan, in Vera Cruz and Tamaulipas; Mazahua, in the State of Mexico; Mixe, in Oaxaca. There are further, some twenty of less importance, such as Mayo, Yaqui, Popolocan, Tarahumaran, Tepehuan, etc. Of more importance is the fact that there are twelve language-groups spoken by more than 10,000 inhabitants each, of which five are spoken by more than 100,000: Mexican by 500,000, Maya and allied tongues by 300,000, Zapotecan by 200,000, Otomí and allied tongues by 250,000, and

Mixtecan by 150,000. The 1930 Census shows that 1,185,000 Mexicans speak only an Indian language, and that 1,065,000 more speak one Indian dialect in addition to Spanish.

The problem here is to make the Indian idioms and dialects disappear, and to extend Spanish as the only idiom. The only way to do this is to teach Spanish to the Indians and to proscribe the use of the Indian languages. Opposed to this unification are all the academic snobbisms which aim at the preservation and even the purification of the indigenous languages which, as dead tongues could have historical and archaeological interest, but as living languages are ethnic barriers. We should decide on Spanish as the only language of the country, and convert the entire indigenous population to it.

I am going to permit myself a short linguistic digression, which seems to me, as a philologist, to be of interest. Of all the indigenous American languages, only Aztec has made its presence felt in Spanish, creating a large number of words of Spanish form with Mexican roots, called Mexicanisms or Aztecisms. Neither Maya, nor Tarascan, nor Otomí, has had any influence on the Spanish spoken in Mexico. The reason is that Aztec extended over all of New Spain, for we can feel its presence in place-names, from Sinaloa, Coahuila, and Zacatecas to Central America. The *Dictionary of the Spanish Academy* catalogues about 100 words of Aztec origin; that of Alemany about 250 words. Robelo's *Dictionary of Aztecisms* lists, aside from geographic names—which are counted in thousands—some

1,400 words, and he omits, it seems to me, more than 200 words in general daily use.

To give an idea of the influence of Aztec on Spanish, it suffices for me to say that even in *Webster*, in the *Oxford* and *Century Dictionaries*, there exist words of Aztec origin which have reached English by way of Spanish: tomato, chocolate, cacao (corrupted into cocoa), ocotea, petate, ocelot, mezquite, and—above all—the names of two popular alcoholic beverages, mezcal and tequila.

The proximity of the United States provides one of the most serious dangers to Spanish in Mexico, not only because of the wide use of English in Mexico, but principally because of corruption of our language. There are now many Anglicisms vitiating our speech as a consequence of the lack of a serious study of the national language, the absence of an intense literary production, and the fact that Spanish is not being written and read intensely. Molina Enríquez pointed out in 1908 the evils of this situation, citing the spread of English publications, advertising, and signs as the principal cause. He wrote, "If this condition continues, our national language will not exist after a few years; we shall have sacrificed it to a repulsive servility." After twenty years, the situation is far worse, due to the widespread use of untranslated English sporting terms, the influence of the cinema, both silent and talking, the fact that English is not confined to its own whole page in Mexico City newspapers, but is sprinkled throughout them, and the sending of Mexican children to American schools and colleges.

Ernest Gruening, in his important book, *Mexico and its Heritage*, says, "The racial considerations underlie all Mexico's difficulties." Molina Enríquez, even in his recent book, *The Agrarian Revolution in Mexico*, attributes such importance to the heterogeneity of races in Mexico that he even interprets the historical events and economic problems as a question of race-conflict.

The existence in Mexico of the three large ethnic groups, traditionally known as Indians, *mestizos*, and creoles, is well known to all. No reliable data exist on the question of races. It is curious that the authorities of the Census of 1930 did not think it necessary to classify the population by races—or could not do so. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the population of Mexico was thought to be 44% Indian, 38% *mestizo*, and 18% white, creole. One hundred years later, these portions were supposed to be 35%, 55%, and 10%, which shows a tendency for *mestizo* increase and Indian and white decrease. This coincided with an increase in population from about 8,000,-000 to about 14,000,000. I calculate that at the present time, of a population of 16,000,000, about 25% are Indian, 70% *mestizo*, and 5% white, native or foreign.

The Indian element, despite its multiplicity of origins and tribes, can be considered as one ethnologic group. The only important differentiation to be made among the indigenous elements is that of three classes of life: nomads, those really separated from civilization; sedentary groups, living in independent communities; and those incorporated into the *mestizo* and white centers of population.

The *mestizos* themselves, despite their diversities of origin, can be considered homogeneous. They live principally in the country, though they appear also in large numbers in the cities and factories. They largely represent mixtures of Indian and Spanish blood. The percentage of African and Asiatic mixtures is unimportant outside Vera Cruz and Guerrero with their mulattos and Sonora and Sinaloa with Chinese mixtures.

In regard to the whites, from the racial point-of-view there is no difference between the creoles and the foreigners, but there is a great difference from the social and economic points-of-view, and it is therefore indispensable to take the distribution of foreigners into account. A glance at the 1930 Census shows that there were 16,392,846 Mexicans and 154,757 foreigners listed, the largest groups of the latter being: Spaniards—47,239, Anglo-Saxons—24,807, Chinese and Japanese—23,275, Latin Americans—19,885; Greeks and Levantines—16,025, French and Italians—9,857, Germans, Austrians, and Swiss—7,658, and Russians, Poles, and Lithuanians—5,865.

The principal problem presented by the foreigner in Mexico is that of his capacity for incorporation into the national population. In this respect it is to be noted that Anglo-Saxon and French immigrants are hardest to Mexicanize, while Spaniards, Germans, and Latin Americans are certain to become Mexicanized in the second generation.

I believe that the problem of race is not the real key to Mexico's difficulties, since racial prejudice does not exist

in Mexico, at least on the part of the *mestizos*, the ones destined ethnologically to unify the country. An educated *mestizo* is practically equal to a creole or European, and no prejudice exists against marriage between creoles and *mestizos* or foreigners and enlightened *mestizos*. A pure Indian, when he has been educated, shows no retrogressive tendency and encounters no difficulty in the way of his marrying a *mestizo*, a creole, or even a foreigner. The diversity of races, though important, is not the principal factor in the heterogeneity and dissimilarity of the component parts of the Mexican people.

The real heterogeneity resides in the existence, side by side, of different stages of civilization. I do not refer here to economic conditions. Classes from an economic point-of-view exist, and have always existed, in every country, even those homogeneous in race, language, and civilization. The class struggle in any European country, or in the United States, is a merely economic question; it is not a conflict of civilizations, of the different levels achieved in the manner of life. In Mexico at the present time the following stages of civilization exist simultaneously: nomads—Apaches, Tarahumaras, Papagos, Yaquis in the North, Lacandones in the South; the patriarchal stage—indigenes of the mountains of Sonora, Durango, Nayarit, Guérro, Oaxaca, Chiapas, Puebla, etc., forming indigenous communities; the feudal stage—*peones*, peasants, and artisans, whether Indians or *mestizos*; the capitalist stage—workers, merchants, industrialists, bankers, professional

men, employees, etc.; and the socialist stage—communistic and theorizing intellectuals of the Russian anarchist type.

Even when these stages correspond approximately to diverse races, they do not correspond entirely. The nomads, to be sure, are all Indians. The groups in the patriarchal stage are almost all Indians. Nevertheless, there are often found in indigenous villages a large proportion of *mestizos* living the same patriarchal life, wearing indigenous clothes, even speaking an indigenous language to the absolute exclusion of Spanish. It is obvious that the higher stages include representatives of every racial group. The key to the interpretation of all Mexico's problems, then, is the differences and coexistence of different stages of civilization.

We can understand, then, that in Mexico there is no such thing as "the Mexican people," but there are various Mexican people, in different grades of civilization. Each time we set out to study some Mexican problem, we can take into account these four or five types of civilization coexisting, and thus better appreciate the difficulties of reaching solutions. It will show us, for example, how difficult it would be to solve the political, and particularly the democratic, problem while thinking of the Mexican people as a homogeneous unit. This is the explanation of the grave error committed by the Revolution at its inception, when Madero believed the most urgent problem to be the political one. The problem of political rights is not a problem of race, but one of culture.

According to the Census of 1930, Mexico has an ideally

homogeneous population as regards religion, for more than 16,000,000 of her 16,500,000 inhabitants are Catholics. The Protestants number less than 150,000, the Mohammedans, Buddhists, etc., less than 50,000, the Jews less than 10,000, and the unclassified less than 200,000. Nevertheless, it would be a serious mistake to believe that this homogeneity of religion exists. The Catholicism of the Indians is nothing more than the form assumed by Aztec idolatry. The Catholicism of the land-workers is a persistence of mediæval superstition. The Indians who, at Chalma, dance the same dance they danced in front of their shrines before the Conquest cannot understand the Catholic religion as it is understood by the Catholic dames who go to mass in the aristocratic churches of Mexico City.

It is impossible to discover one formula for the protection of the civil rights of all social classes in Mexico. We have thirty civil codes based on the Code Napoleon, and even some conforming to the modern German theories of rights. But these codes cannot be applied. It is not the diversity of races that constitutes the difficulty, nor the diversity of social or economic conditions, but the diversity of levels of civilization.

Family and inheritance rights cannot be established in the same form for nomad Indians as for sedentary Indians, or *mestizos*, among whom there is still a very considerable percentage of illegitimate children, nor for inhabitants of the large cities, where there are the obligatory laws of the Civil Register. As regards property rights, it has been impossible to find a legal form which equally protects the

individual private property, with written title, of the capitalist system, and the traditional communal property of the indigenous populations and communities.

In the matter of the treatment of criminals, it is easy to see at once the difficulty of finding a system equally applicable to all—because of the difference in responsibility of each human type, and of the effects of the same punishment as applied to different types of civilization. The prison in the commissariat or penitentiary is, for the Indian or the beggar, an agreeable vacation, while for a foreigner or a “decent person” it constitutes one of the most insufferable torments, whatever his race may be. Deportation to the Islas Marías does not imply the same degree of suffering for a common thief as to a Catholic dame or a communist leader. The penalty of death itself does not produce the same effects of good behavior among the different social classes.

The diversity of levels of civilization living side by side in city and country explains the unspeakable characteristics of criminality in Mexico, and shows that it is impossible, with the threat of one punishment, to control human types varying from the nomad and the troglodyte to the refinement of European life.

If one studies, for example, the questions of public health, he sees that, while we have in Mexico a Sanitary Code and rules for cleaning the streets, drainage, provision of chlorinated water, anti-rabies vaccine, etc., the Department of Health is impotent to take care of the millions of people living on the unhealthful coasts, victims of

malaria, or those who die in the forests, without homes, or in miserable and unsanitary huts, where dozens crowd together promiscuously with dogs and pigs. This, to the gates of Mexico City.

The organization of a Mexican army cannot be achieved in a sensible form while such diversity of social classes exists. Theoretically, we have a modern army with the latest type of armament, but practically the life of a common soldier is subject to the customs of the lowest Indian or *mestizo* level, while that of the officer and chief conform to the most civilized manners—from which results the feudal system rampant in the army and at the bottom of personal bossism.

In Mexico City, we have model schools, normal schools, a Department of Education with a psychopedagogic section to apply scientific methods of mental measurement to the students, a University for the formation of professional workers and for higher studies—but what systems of education can be followed for the children of Indians who do not even speak Spanish? The problem of education in Mexico is a problem of culture from the bottom towards the top, rather than one of the instruction of the urban classes.

The examples I have given make us see that, for the solving of our national problems, we always adopt the most advanced modern theoretical solution, but that in practice all the solutions worked out in other countries and for other races crumple up before the difficulty of the heterogeneous type of life of our inferior classes. I have not at-

tempted to present a plan for the solution of these problems, nor even for their study, but simply to give what, in my concept, is the key to understanding the difficulties in the way of solving them.

The fundamental problems are: to make the race a homogeneous one, fusing its inferior elements—the Indians—and its superior ones—the whites—in the *mestizo* race; to make Spanish the universal national language; to educate all our social classes, not only in the sense of instructing them or transmitting knowledge to them through books, but principally in that of changing their system of life, if not to an existence equal to that of the most civilized peoples, at least to a condition of homogeneous civilization which would permit the consideration of the Mexican people as one people, and not as an aggregation of dissimilar social classes.

There are some who seriously believe that the solution of all our national problems must take the Soviet form, through the establishment of Russian Communism and the decreeing of everybody's equality in civilization.

There are other solutions which we might copy from other places and other times, for example, that of killing the Indians and taking their lands as the English immigrants to the United States did, instead of leaving them alive as the *conquistador* landholders did. We might kill the creoles and the foreigners, and redivide their properties among the Indians and the *mestizos*. Or kill the infidels, as in the time of Mohammed. Or kill the heretics, as in the time of the Inquisition. "Kill, kill, kill, kill," as King Lear said.

But all the methods which consist of killing and killing do not solve the problem. We have stood for killing each other long enough in Mexico. We do not propose to kill; we propose to live, and to make it certain that the diverse component parts of our nation shall go on living, growing, and multiplying for the aggrandizement of our fatherland.

## FOLKWAYS AND CITY WAYS

by Robert Redfield

IN characterizing Mexico, especially in contrasting it with the United States, it is usual to emphasize the extent to which that country is Indian rather than European. No two other countries which are adjacent, and separated by a boundary which is in large part artificial, differ so much in blood and tradition. In contributing to this difference, the contrast between Anglo-Saxon and Spanish heritage is an important factor, but even more striking is the contrast between a country in which the Indian element is insignificant, and one in which it is very great, in some respects paramount.

No satisfactory means are available for determining the proportion of Indian to white blood in the Mexican population. The census of 1931 divided the people into three principal racial groups: Indians 22.9 per cent, *mestizos* 59.3 per cent, and whites 9.8 per cent. The bases upon which the enumerators made this classification are not clear. Ernest Gruening thinks that about four per cent of the Mexican people are of pure white blood. Some students of the matter estimate that, however the Indian blood may be distributed throughout the population today, it amounts to about sixty per cent of the whole.

Consideration of the fact that only about 300,000 Span-

iards are reported as having entered Mexico in colonial times, and of the estimates of the numbers of Indians—at least 3,000,000—living in Mexico at the time of the Conquest, suggests that this figure is too low, and that it may be that Mexico is four-fifths Indian by race. In the United States the number of Indians, whether defined in terms of listing on the tribal rolls or in terms of persons recognized as Indians in the communities where they live, is only from 200,000 to 400,000. It is probably safe to say that, biologically speaking, Mexico is 300 times as Indian as the United States.

The same contrast appears with respect to custom and tradition. Apart from cultivated plants of which the white settlers learned from the aborigines, the Indian contribution to our heritage is almost limited to a few words in our vocabulary, the forms of certain corn granaries and other agricultural techniques, and a certain slight embellishment of life in the shape of feather head-dresses, birchbark canoes, and the like, of some significance to the tourist business and the manufacturers of art calendars. In Mexico, on the other hand, Indian traditions are apparent everywhere, and were they to be taken from the fabric of present-day life, that fabric would fall to pieces entirely. The tools of life, especially, are Indian. The white conqueror moved into an Indian kitchen, was fed by an Indian woman cooking Indian foods in Indian ways, brought to her by an Indian system of production and distribution. This kitchen and its equipment, the techniques of production and preparation of the basic foods, and the regional

division of labor and the market system which prevailed before Cortés are all in degree present today. The oxcarts, plows, roads, railroads, factories, and foods of Europe and of modern civilization lie upon or beside the Indian technical systems, but have not displaced many of them.

The Indian elements in social organization, moral ideas, and religious belief and practice are also great, though not always so easy to identify. The deities of the rain and the maize, bearing Indian names, and receiving a ritual that involves oriented altars, and certain ritual breads made of squash-seeds and maize, such as are still made or recognized by rural Mexican worshippers in Yucatán and elsewhere, are of course undeniably Indian in origin. Moreover, the student comes to feel that some contribution from Indian tradition is present in institutions and practices apparently European in form. The *santo* may be a Catholic saint, recognized in the church calendar and clothed in the habiliments of Europe, but it is a commonplace to assert what is probably true; that some part of the attitudes and practices with respect to the indigenous deity and idol, transmitted from generations before the Conquest to generations after it, persists in the feeling and action of the present-day rural Mexican. Similarly, it is very likely true that there are Indian contributions in the institution of godparenthood, Catholic though it be in form, as there certainly are in marriage customs practiced in villages of southern Mexico.

The Indian elements vary in the geographic spread of their prevalence, and in the extent to which they are pres-

ent in all social classes. Some, like the *tortilla*, are found everywhere and are made use of by rich and sophisticated as well as by poor and ignorant, while others, like the *volador* ritual, by which men swing themselves, revolving, from a pole, and the aboriginal divinatory calendar, are present in only a few villages of southern Mexico (and also in Guatemala). But the Indian elements are, on the whole, abundant, conspicuous, and pervasive, and are indispensable ingredients in the compound which is Mexican life today.

If the question be asked why it is more than a mere matter of historical interest to recall the Indian sources of much of Mexican life, and why those sources are indeed a significant fact in understanding Mexico and its problems, a variety of answers presents itself. Three of these answers will be mentioned here: two to be stated and then rejected in favor of the third, exposition of which constitutes the essential point of this paper.

In the first place, it may be of significance that Mexico is largely Indian, that is American Mongoloid, in racial composition, for the possible reason that American Mongoloids are different, in neural or other structural features, from Caucasians and Negroids, and that therefore there are inherent limitations or qualifications upon their behavior. In other words, it may be that Mexicans, being largely Indians, are organisms structurally predisposed to be artistic, or to act phlegmatically, or to revolt against authority, or not to revolt against authority, to learn slowly and badly, to learn rapidly and well, to be cruel, or

to be kind and hospitable—all, of course, in comparison with some other biologically distinguishable human group. The questions raised by this kind of assumption are hardy perennials, both in the literature of science and in commonsense comment, but they are largely unanswered questions.

One probably speaks for the majority of considered opinion when one says that we do not know whether such inherent differences and limitations exist, and that there is no very good evidence that they do. No satisfactory way has been found to discriminate such possible inherent differences from the blend and matrix of accumulated experience and tradition in which all but the very simplest human behavior always takes place. Nor is there any more conclusive evidence for the variant view to the effect that it is the radically mixed racial character of the Mexican population that is of significance in understanding Mexican behavior: that hybrids, as such, are to be expected to behave differently, for biological reasons, from less recently mixed peoples. For, on the side of history, one may point to the successes achieved by mixed peoples to offset arguments as to their supposed inferiority; and, on the side of direct examination of the hybrid, the evidence we have indicates that Indian-white hybrids are at least as large, tall, and prolific as either parent group. That the Mexicans are, in large part, biologically Indian may be important, but is not known to be.

Turning from the biologically Indian features of Mexico to the culturally Indian features, one is on surer ground in

asserting the importance of their presence in accounting for Mexico and in understanding Mexico's problems. The Mexican masses, having a heritage of custom that is notably different from that of the people of the United States and western Europe, and even notably different from that of the upper classes of Mexico itself, are to that extent remote from the Euro-American world that is still dominant and is still extending its influence, and they are to that extent remote from their own leaders. By the divergence of custom and sophistication between the rural Mexicans and their northern neighbors, by the similar divergence between the upper class Mexican and the *peón*, and by the differences in local customs between one rural group and another, Mexico is separated from the modern western world, from itself, and within itself. In stating the Indian-ness of the common people of Mexico, we do, therefore, call attention to some of the difficulties in the way of organizing Mexico as a nation of similarly acting and thinking citizens, and in the way of Mexico's full participation in the civilized world of this hemisphere.

Relevant as is this second answer to the question put at the beginning of this discussion, a third formulation of the reply brings us still closer to the significant essentials. The importance of the Indian elements in Mexican life lies not in the fact that they are specifically indigenous in historical origin, but in the fact that the many and characteristic village communities have the qualities which we call "primitive." In other words, Mexico is still in considerable part composed of isolated, non-literate communities of

simple peoples, who live each in the little local world of that village or group of villages, and whose behavior has the characteristics which we find everywhere among tribal or peasant peoples.

Whether an element of rural Mexican custom is Indian in historical origin, or is Spanish, cannot always be determined, and is never as important as is the quality of the mode of life and the attendant behavior of the villagers who live under such customs. Indeed, as will be illustrated later, many, if not most, of the elements of culture of rural Mexicans are European in origin, not Indian; but Indian and Spanish elements alike and together contribute in these Mexican villages to form a round of life, a pattern for living, cut out by the cultures of non-literate peoples everywhere, and that is in these same respects different from the modes of life to be found in cities everywhere, especially in our modern western cities. To include under one term peasant and tribal natives, the Melanesian, the African, and the Mexican and Chinese villager, they and their mode of life may be denoted "folk"—for all these people have abundant folklore, folktales, and often folksongs. The essential contrast is, then, between folk and city, between folkways and city ways. Mexico's characteristics arise not so much because her rural life is specifically Indian, as from the fact that her people are still "folk."

If, then, we do not allow ourselves to be distracted by the interesting, but practically less important, question as to what elements in the Mexican rural cultures are Indian, and what are Spanish, we are free to characterize the cul-

tures in terms of their approximation to the qualities of all primitive and simple cultures—their folk-ness rather than their Indian-ness. The characters we recognize in these folk cultures will be characters shared by all folk cultures, of whatever historical antecedents, and they will be the negatives of the characters to be found in modern urban life.

What is to be said about the Mexican people in these terms is more nearly true, of course, in the isolated villages where literacy does not exist, or is not made the instrument of communication with minds of other times and other places, and is less and less true as one turns from such isolated villages to the towns and cities. Folk-ness and rusticity are closely related.

The folk societies of Mexico are local communities characterized by highly homogeneous cultures. That is to say, making due allowance for the technical knowledge of the specialized artisan and artist, for the greater wisdom of the old, and for the esoteric lore of the herbalist or native religious functionary, what one man knows and does is much like what another knows and does. The organization of experience which constitutes the mental world of one individual, and within which he moves and finds his solutions for life's problems, is much like that of his neighbor, so that these mental worlds tend to coincide and to agree with the general pattern of life—the culture of the local community. This character follows, of course, from the fact that communication within the local community is intimate and free, but tends to stop short at its mountain

walls. Therefore, while within the local community the ways of life may be recognized from the habits of almost any individual, the next local community—village or group of villages—often has notably different ways of life. There is local uniformity, but regional diversity.

Each of these folk cultures of Mexico, like those of any other part of the world, is not a store or a stock of customs and institutions, each existing separately and in terms of itself, as tends to be the case in our more mobile urban centers, but is rather an organization, a fabric of closely interwoven parts. In describing these cultures, we find it possible, indeed inescapable, to begin at almost any point in this fabric and follow up the interconnected threads to other parts of the whole. The growing of maize is not merely the growing of maize in order to fill the granary and then the stomach; it is in some part a religious exercise, the fulfilment of a moral obligation, and the discharge of a duty that devolves upon, or rather that springs from, the inner conscience of every adult male in every family group. The maize is god-given; or it is bought with offering and sacrifice; agricultural work is closely related to prayer; the *milpa* is not merely a cornfield, a place of toil like a shop or factory, but also a holy place, or at least an uncanny one. So also we find in these folk communities that sickness is often not merely sickness, a separate misadventure, unrelated to anything but its mechanical or chemical cause and its practical cure, but tends to be regarded also as an aspect of piety, namely, as the result of a moral lapse.

For in these folk societies the sacred quality of life is important, and pervades those activities which in the city world exist merely as instruments to the achievement of practical ends. Piety is stressed, rather than expediency or efficiency. The interdependence of religious experience, moral life, and agriculture just mentioned, is perhaps the most obvious aspect of the pervasiveness of the sacred quality. In measuring off the land to be cleared for a new field of corn, no more must be measured than one is sure to clear and plant, for the bush—say the Maya—belongs to the gods of the bush, and they would be angry should one take more than one needs. And the harvest is not man's to consume until he has, in symbol, given it back to its real owners, the gods (or the saint), in the first-fruit ceremonies. On the whole, in these folk societies, one does what one does because one feels it to be right to do it, and because a moral and religious sanction supports that act.

Furthermore, these folk cultures are closely involved with the local habitat. The village Mexican does not merely rest upon the land; he and his ways of life are a part of the land. This fact is evident in the detailed and descriptive naming of all features of the local landscape; each slope, turn in the road, and house-site bears its own name, generally in the Indian language. It is manifest in the store of legends and tales with respect to parts of this local environment, explaining its forms and narrating its history, moral or merely exciting. It is apparent in the extensive knowledge had by the people of the animals and plants of their local habitat—this plant a medicinal herb, that one

sacred to the rain-gods, this animal a provider of magical charms for the hunter, that one an intermediary between the gods and men. It is not too much to say that the culture of the more isolated of these communities is so closely articulated with the local valley and hills that it cannot exist apart from the local site. The saint is not really movable; his rituals function only where they are at home.

The local world is, then, separate, complete, distinct. And to it the loyalties of the individual tend to be attached. The saint is patron of this village and of these villagers; he does not exercise his guardianship or perform his miracles for men who belong to other villages or other valley communities. Even where the authority and claim of the republic receives some recognition, the local community is the homeland, and the fatherland. For it the Mexican has a name—the *patria chica*. The villagers beyond the hills are not *paisanos*; they are, to a degree, aliens, men to be met, if at all, in the market, not in the home or in the brotherhood that tends the *santo*. And the villages a hundred miles away are not known at all.

In so characterizing the Mexican folk, the question as to the historical origins of the elements that go to make up custom and institution is irrelevant. It is not important that some of the elements of these cultures are European in source. The name and the form of the *santo* have been brought from Spain, as have some of the medicinal and sacred plants. Their place of origin is not the significant fact, but rather the local and tutelary character of the saint, and the sacred and local character of the plants.

Similarly, what is significant to remark as Mexico changes is the breakdown of these folk cultures, their conversion into a more mobile and secular mode of life, the change from folkways to city ways. As roads and schools and other modernizing influences educate the people, raise their standard of living, present them with ways to live that are inconsistent with those handed down by local tradition, and in general offer them new economic and intellectual opportunities, so are the folk destroyed and a nation built in their place. In describing what takes place, we may note that "pagan customs" or other elements of Indian origin disappear. But so do elements of Spanish origin disappear; and again, which is Spanish and which is Indian is not so significant as is the loss in folk-ness, and the becoming more city-like of life.

The point may be illustrated by referring to the changes which are taking place in an institution that is widely to be found in the Mexican folk cultures. This is known in many villages as the *mayordomía*, elsewhere by other names. It is the institution which effects the performance and perpetuation of the *fiesta* of the patron saint. In many of the more isolated villages the *fiesta* of the patron saint is the annual collective recognition by the community of the obligation it owes to its divine patron for the protection afforded during the past year, and also the collective prayer of the village for continued benefaction. The obligation is a sacred charge, a perpetual vow made by the community to its *santo*; indeed, the word "charge" or "burden" is sometimes used for it. This sacred burden rests

upon the community as a whole. But each year some one votary, some religious volunteer, must step forward to assume, for that year, the principal share of the obligation and the leadership in the festival. This person is known (in some places) as the *mayordomo*, his office as the *mayordomía* (elsewhere he is called the "first burden-bearer" and the like). He organizes the *fiesta*, provides for the candles, the fireworks, or the other elements of entertainment and ritual. It may cost him the earnings of a year properly to discharge his office. But characteristically his part in the sacred charge is only a share; the rest of the burden, of the collective pledge, is parcelled out among others in the community, even among all. This is accomplished by a variety of devices: by subordinate, and sub-subordinate burden-bearers; by taking up voluntary offerings in money or in food; by recording perpetual individual pledges of contributions which must be made every year in the same amount. For though the eternal vow, pledging the community to its *santo*, rests upon the entire community, the separate shares in that responsibility exist, as it were, in different denominations, and are arranged hierarchically, with the *mayordomo* at the head. And each year, though the structure, the ritual pattern, and the hierarchical organization remain the same, different individuals fill different places in this structure. In this way provision is made for variations in religious impulse or piety, and in economic ability to defray the costs of the *fiesta*. The wealthy man, or the man to whom the *santo*

has accorded a special benefit, will volunteer to serve as *mayordomo*.

In the *fiesta* as it is performed in such villages, besides the worship of the *santo*—the offerings in the form of prayer, candles, fireworks, or religious dances, and the more secular entertainment, such as the rustic bullfights—the core of the ritual is a ceremonious handing over of a symbol of the sacred charge from the *mayordomo* this year to the *mayordomo* who will organize the *fiesta* next year. It may be the stub ends of the candles that were burned on the altar that are ritually delivered from one incumbent to the next, or the framework of the fireworks tower, or—in the villages of Yucatán—specially constructed towers hung with cornhusk effigies and festal breads, and also the heads of the hogs slaughtered to make the ritual foods. In every case this ceremonious transmission signalizes the shifting of the principal burden from one pair of shoulders to another. The community has again recognized the relationship between itself and its patron deity, while a new votary has been given a chance to attest his piety. Other parts of the ritual provide for the parcelling out of this charge among others in the community, until, perhaps, all are again involved in an ordered system of obligations to pay and to perform ritual on the next name-day of the saint. There are, furthermore, rituals at other times in the year which revive and set into operation the festal machinery which lies latent and manned, ready always to be called forth in time for the next *fiesta*.

Of course, this ritual institution functions completely

only in the villages which are least disturbed by modernizing influences. In more mobile communities it breaks down, or changes its form and meaning. The nature of the changes which this institution undergoes illustrates the general character of the changes taking place in Mexico as folkways give way to city ways. In examining the changes undergone by the *mayordomía*, we are not struck by any progressive decrease in its Indian character and the comparative survival of Spanish features. The historical origins of the *mayordomía* are uncertain. In large part they may very well be Spanish; for religious brotherhoods with not entirely different rituals are known from Spain. Certainly most of the elements of the ritual are Spanish: the candles, prayers, fireworks, and rustic bullfight. And certainly the striking changes cannot be described as a becoming less Indian or more Indian. What actually happens is something very different. The whole complex of beliefs and practices, here called the *mayordomía*, changes its character, loses elements of meaning and of action, and finally disappears entirely. First, though the *fiesta* remains in formal execution, it loses its sacred significance. The *santo* is no longer brought from the temple to watch the dancers as they dance. It is no longer brought because the dancers no longer feel that their dancing is a religious act, an offering to deity. They have been to school, perhaps, or they have worked in the towns. Then, also, the candles, the fireworks, the bulls, even the prayers may remain—but the little central ritual whereby the symbols of the sacred charge are handed over to the next *mayordomo*, is left out.

or perfunctorily performed. In Yucatán, when this has happened, the people cease to call the *fiesta* "charge" or "burden." "It is only a *fiesta*," they say. There are now members of the community who enter into the *fiesta* only for the good time, or who—having lived in the city, and acquired a sense of superiority—even stand aside and look on, aloof and non-participant. The homogeneity of the community has been broken; the loss of rituals and of their meaning has severed some of the interconnections which previously wove together the web of the culture; the *fiesta* has become less sacred, more secular—a holiday, no longer a holy day.

It is, therefore, not of first significance that much of the blood and many of the customs of the rural Mexicans are derived from indigenous sources, or even that the customs of such Mexicans are different from those of urbanized European-Americans, but rather that to a degree the social organizations and the ways of life of the Mexican villagers are of a kind—here called "folk"—that is incompatible with national life and that disappears as national life is attained. So long as many Mexicans live in folk cultures certain things are true of them which are not true of people in cities, and which cannot be true of a nation. In such folk cultures the village or the group of villages is the social unit to which the individual recognizes himself as belonging. In such communities the role of the individual is to a degree determined before his birth through the family and neighborhood in which he is born; his occupation may be inherited; and his wife, his relatives-in-law, and his god-

parents are selected for him by his parents and his more remote kin. The tasks of life are shot through with religious implications; there is at hand a traditional ritual, in the performance of which the individual cooperates with his neighbors, and which provides for his religious, social, esthetic, and recreative expression in a manner so unified that it would be error to identify the Mexican *fiesta* with any one of these, in our civilization, much more separate forms of activity.

In fact, however, Mexico does not, except in its most isolated corners, provide us with examples of folk cultures that measure up perfectly to the characters generally stated here. The villages are not entirely isolated; many are bound to the towns by trade, neighborliness, and even by kinship, real or through baptism; others are located upon large estates, where their inhabitants have personal as well as economic relations with the *hacienda* foreman, the artisan from the town, and even the upper class Mexican who owns the estate. The folk cultures of Mexico are integrated, with varying degrees of completeness, into the wider network of relationships which is the developing Mexican nation. And every year, and especially rapidly since the social revolution, this integration grows, and the folkways give further ground to a national life.

Naming this change in general terms—from folk to nation—we recognize that we have seen it before, and that it is essentially the same, wherever it takes place, among backward European peasants, in the Orient, or in Mexico. And, profiting by the observation of other cases, and

guided by knowledge of what has already happened in Mexico, we know what is likely to happen as the process continues. The separate village cultures will break down, and many of them will disappear. We shall come to find one village more like another than it is now, but we shall find increasingly different kinds of people in any one village. We shall find life, for these villagers, becoming increasingly secular. The maize will be grown more in accordance with expert agronomic advice, and less in response to the dictates of an ancient ritual. Monetary valuation of consumable goods will be more responsive than now to the wider market, and will tend to eliminate more personal and irrational considerations. We shall hear less of Mexicans who refuse to make an order of ten pots or chairs all alike, or who charge more for each of ten chairs sold at once than for ten sold separately. The individual from the village will be freer to come and go, to think, and to choose his work and his play and his wife than he is now—and the controls now exerted over him by the complex familial and neighborhood structure, expressed in ritual and clad in the voice of the saint, will lose their authority. The festival will be more of carnival and less of prayer. The folk arts will go, or at least change their character. Some of the applied arts that remain will stay under commercial exploitation. The folk songs will leave the lips of the folksinger who has become a city man, or they will continue on his lips as the self-conscious or even sophisticated expressions of the artist or the cultivator of what then becomes a national heritage. The folk dances that

were offerings to the *santo*, to appease the wrath of that deity or to repay his bounty, the dances that were danced as prayer is prayed or as penance is done, will be cultivated—indeed, they are now cultivated—by the artist in the city, or by the specialist in “Folk Arts” in the normal school, and spread by these men and women from the local soil in which they grew to the programs of entertainment in all parts of the republic. They will then be “folk” dances only in the reminiscent sense—only because a folk once danced them, as a part of its social, recreative, and religious life. For the deliberate cultivation of the folk arts develops only as the folkways disappear.

# INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS ON THE AMERICAN CONTINENTS

*by Edwin M. Borchard*

THE American continents have advantages over the European which promise the Americas a more hopeful future. First, they have the advantage of having a short history—no history, it might be said; they have, therefore, not developed those deep-seated psychological antagonisms and feuds which menace Europe. Second, they have the advantage of under- rather than over-population, of under- and not over-industrialization, thus avoiding the recurrent external political and economic tensions which periodically disturb the industrialized nation. Third, they have vast expanse, diversity of climate, and natural resources, offering unlimited prospects of future development with the aid of European immigration.

The disadvantages of the American continents, as far as the Latin American countries are concerned, are (a) a largely uneducated native population, varying in size and proportion in the several countries, with primitive farming the almost exclusive occupation; (b) lack of capital; (c) a thin top layer of educated persons, constituting the governing class, on whose sense of enlightened responsibility and control of the army often depend the stability of the government and the well-being of the people. But one cannot visit Latin America without acquiring some ad-

miration for the foundations laid by the colonial administrators; for while feudal forms and conceptions underlie much of the ostensibly democratic structure, political and economic, the infiltration of European social ideas has produced a ferment likely to be fruitful for the well-being of labor. It is, of course, dangerous to generalize about twenty countries differing as greatly from each other as Argentina and El Salvador, or Brazil and Honduras, and whose cultural ties are sometimes closer to Spain and France than to each other or to the United States. But they all represent the interesting phenomenon of a cultural heritage primarily European, but constantly nourished by native roots, and an economic orientation gradually turning to the United States, from which they derived for a century a now much-resented political protection against the reassertion of European dominion on this hemisphere.

Endowed by nature with riches susceptible to economic exploitation, unable for many decades to find the necessary capital, they naturally had an economy in which the foreigner played a large role, and international policies affected by him. Given, further, the temptation caused by political immaturity—except as the Church might have furnished experience—by frequent internecine strife often accompanying changes of administration, with the consequent weakening of political and financial structures, several of these countries have, from time to time, afforded an invitation to competing European imperialisms which might have proved irresistible but for the warning in the Monroe Doctrine. In the 1860's, while the United States

was otherwise engaged, Napoleon III tried to seat Maximilian on the Mexican throne, an experience which might have had other exemplification but for the efficiency of the United States's *caveat*.

As the Latin American countries have grown in population, power, and maturity, the need or occasion for a unilateral Monroe Doctrine has probably passed, and the recent efforts to broaden its potential administration by invoking joint American protection for common American interests may well replace its original implications. Its policy, while primarily dictated by a desire to preserve the United States and democratic institutions, never, of course, justified the assumption, not generally entertained in the United States at any time, that we had arrogated to ourselves a certain tutelage of the Latin American countries, or deemed ourselves mentors of their policy or internal administration. The facts that propinquity induced definite interest in the stability of the Caribbean and Central American countries, that our control of the Panamá Canal induced greater military interest in the Caribbean, that financial weakness or political disorder in Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and elsewhere, brought about occasional financial intervention, if it may be called that, have unjustifiably been charged to the Monroe Doctrine, thus giving it a connotation it never had, making it represent to Latin American critics a form of policy which probably would not have been different had the Doctrine never existed. It is natural that a policy as vague as the Monroe Doctrine should, from time to time, be invoked as

a support by some of the many administrators who, for over a century, have had charge of a nation's affairs, and that ephemeral distortions, such as that of Olney, should occur. These were mainly verbal or tactical errors which never in practice deleteriously affected Latin America. If its prestige or pride occasionally seems impugned by an ebullient remark, comfort may be taken in the fact that territorial or political encroachments have been extremely rare for nearly a century, and have been impermanent.

Granting the desirability of never having intervened, even diplomatically, in Central American affairs, let the student of foreign affairs examine the history of Africa and Asia for comparisons between the imperialism of the United States and that of Europe. I do not intend to suggest that European interventions have always been unfortunate for the victim; but if political liberty seems a desirable objective, and non-intervention a fundamental principle, one may submit as an hypothesis that intervention by Europe rather than the United States might have left the history of the Central American and Caribbean countries quite a different one. American roots have never struck so deep that interference proved permanent, and while intervention is always regrettable, the withdrawal of the United States from Central America and elsewhere have been mainly in response to public opinion in the United States, which in principle has opposed foreign exploitation and entanglement. The intervention in Haiti came as the result of a holocaust of Presidential assassinations, and only after France had threatened to intervene;

Bryan and Wilson permitted it with utmost reluctance. The withdrawal during 1934 was the result of enlightened American opinion.

Given the necessity of financial rehabilitation in Haiti, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic, it can hardly be surprising in a capitalist order that the lender, especially when persuaded to lend by the Government of the United States, should not be left altogether without support, for the required loan would not otherwise have been made. These are complicated problems, having two distinct sides, and concerning which easy generalization should be avoided. The abandonment of the Platt Amendment was voluntary, and may be deemed to refute the view that the United States seeks to control the economic and political destiny of countries on the northern American continent, not to speak of the southern.

The facts that these countries possess resources which the world requires, that they themselves wish them exploited, that only foreign capital is available, and that the proximity of the United States creates a tendency to American investment—which, indeed, one of their governments may solicit and foster—create problems calling for wisdom, self-restraint, and judgment, if no improper advantage is to be taken, and if the interests of all parties are to receive proper protection in the light of all the circumstances, not least of all the political relations between the United States and countries who eye the procedure critically, and draw political inferences from it. The commitment, at Montevideo, of the United States against intervention,

except after agreement with the major American countries, is probably as far as statesmanship can now go. It might have been advisable to make this commitment in 1928 at Havana, for the reluctance there evident led to the inference that the United States desires to intervene, a conclusion hardly justified by the facts. Just what the effects of a general consultation as a condition of intervention are likely to be cannot be forecast. It may be hoped that the eruptions and crises which heretofore have induced intervention will not return, so that the problem will become academic. But this fortunate dispensation cannot be relied upon, and it is probable that the paternalistic attitude of the past will be replaced by a sense of common responsibility for the stability of the weaker countries on this continent.

Far more questionable is the policy announced in the Mobile speech of President Wilson in 1913, in which he undertook to discourage Latin American revolutions by proposing to refuse recognition to any government which was the product of revolution. This was unfortunate because it was not realistic, took little account of the facts of Latin American experience and polity, and was impractical. The assumption that revolutions could be stopped by refusing recognition, however important it is to those countries, is akin to the one that you could make the world safe for democracy by fighting a European war. Such positions seem more likely to frustrate democracy. But in addition to its impractical character, and to the circumstance that it was a reversal of the traditional Amer-

ican policy of admitting plain facts and recognizing governments in power, the Wilson policy failed to take account of the fact that the methods of changing governments in some Latin American countries have not yet reached the complicated legal forms generally—not always justifiably—associated with elections in more industrially developed countries. We prefer the electoral method of changing governments, and do not always inquire how genuine, stable, and uncontrolled the public opinion behind the election is, or whether the forms and substance are as important as sometimes assumed to be. But, above all, the prospect that the United States would refuse recognition to governments which foreign nations or leaders establish in their own way, especially in view of the revolutionary origin of the United States, constituted a most effective intervention in the affairs of foreign countries, and if carried into general effect would have caused the United States and the world much distress. In the case of Huerta in Mexico, it led the United States and Mexico into a morass from which it was impossible to extricate either country without loss of life, property, and prestige. Fortunately, and as predicted, the policy has proved impractical, but it subjected President Wilson to the blandishments of ambassadors zealous to explain that their particular revolution was constitutional; on that basis, to the amusement of nations, some were recognized. Favoritism and adroitness became the tests of recognition until the policy was openly abandoned.

The so-called Stimson Doctrine, of non-recognition with

respect to conquests, announced in 1932, finds a precedent in the Second Pan American Convention of 1901, and is reincorporated in other American pacts, such as the Argentine Anti-War Pact, ratified by the United States in June, 1934. Experience hardly justifies much hope in the pacifying functions of such doctrines. Indeed, the policy of boycott to accomplish a moral objective has acquired an unfortunate hold on the imagination of peace-lovers, who erroneously consider boycott a peaceful weapon for producing peaceful results. Contrary to a widespread assumption, it is not an American obligation to throttle or stop foreign revolutions, in Latin America or elsewhere. The assumption that it is a duty led to the ill-advised embargo on arms to the Vargas revolutionists in Brazil in 1930, a procedure followed the next day by the complete success of the Vargas party and by the recognition of the United States a few days later. If embargoes are to be laid, they should be laid against both sides of a foreign struggle, civil or international; only thus will they be legal under international law and avoid dangers for the United States. In the case of Mexico, the periodic enforcement and lifting of embargoes against one or another group implied dangerous intervention in the affairs of another country, and aroused widespread suspicion of the objectivity of American policy. Its risks are not justified by the avowed motive of hastening the restoration of peace, necessarily in favor of one regime, in a neighboring country. The United States should not assume the hazards of judging the merits of a foreign political upheaval.

The lack of population and capital in most of the Latin American countries led to the immigration of foreigners, and to the solicited investment of foreign capital, on concessions for public works, as loans to public and private enterprise, and in the conduct of ordinary business. Political uncertainties, occasional administrative disorganization, insurrections and disturbances, changes in governmental policy, led at times to the injury of foreigners and their property. This, in turn, produced international claims, for the country of the person affected did not fail to advance a claim for compensation. This department of international affairs affords possibly the largest chapter in the complex of relations between the countries of western Europe and the United States on one hand, and the weaker countries of Latin America on the other. The few interventions by European countries, as in Buenos Aires, Mexico, and Venezuela, can be laid to this excuse, and but for the Monroe Doctrine might have been multiplied.

In the case of Mexico and the United States, the subject of claims has occupied the Foreign Offices of both countries since the early 1830's, and claims were occasionally used before 1857 as a makeweight in negotiations for territorial cessions. They not only embittered relations between the countries, but they afforded a temptation to employ political pressure to achieve political objectives. In a country suffering from periodic unrest and disorganization, foreigners are hardly likely to be more immune from the consequences than natives. The frequency of local disorder led foreign countries to expect and demand a measure of

safety for foreigners greater than that enjoyed by natives, and amounting in some cases very nearly to a guarantee. This led to complaints from some Latin American countries that they were victimized by stronger powers who exacted indemnities and sacrifices beyond those authorized by international law, and led to the development of doctrines like that of Calvo, which maintained that foreigners had no greater right than natives, and must content themselves with those measures of redress afforded by the domestic legal system, without the privilege of invoking diplomatic protection. The conflict of views is not yet settled, and was primarily instrumental in preventing the conclusion of any agreement at the Hague Codification Conference of 1930, on the international responsibility of states arising out of injuries to aliens. The provision for equality as the limit of foreigners' rights has been written into Latin American constitutions, statutes, concession contracts, and even treaties. In recent years Mexico has obtained a certain recognition from international tribunals of the validity of the doctrine that when foreigners accept concessions on condition of resort to local remedies—which, in fact, international law in principle requires—they cannot escape the obligation by invoking diplomatic protection directly, but must comply with the condition, and establish a denial of justice before diplomatic interposition or even an international judicial claim is admissible. The United States has been a strong supporter of the arbitration of claims, and with Mexico alone has held four important arbitrations: one in 1839, presided over by

Baron Roenne of Prussia; one in 1849, a domestic commission to distribute a lump-sum settlement; one in 1868; and a protracted one, recently given a new lease of life, under the treaties of 1923. These are among the soundest methods of establishing international law as a substitute for physical power in the diplomatic relations between countries, and it may be said to the credit of the countries of this continent that arbitration of such matters has become established custom. Diplomatic protection is a highly political act, involving the peoples of two countries, as well as the affairs of private individuals, and everything done to take the adjustment of these disputes out of the field of politics into the realm of law is a gain for all concerned and for international peace.

The Latin American countries, many of them farther removed, geographically and physically, from each other than they are from Europe and the United States, have nevertheless found lines of common interest, manifested in the growing number of treaties, and more especially in the increasingly significant conclusions of the Pan American Conferences. Disregarding the more rudimentary, earlier ones, the modern series may be said to have begun in 1889, with the conference at Montevideo. James G. Blaine may be said to have laid the spiritual foundations for this conference and its successors. General diplomatic conferences of the same type followed—at Mexico City in 1901, at Rio de Janeiro in 1906, at Buenos Aires in 1910, at Santiago in 1923, at Havana in 1928, and at Montevideo in 1933—in addition to commercial, financial, and technical confer-

ences calculated to promote understanding and cooperation among the American nations.

These conferences manifest constantly increasing achievement in the importance of the matters discussed, in the degree of ratification received by the resolutions, and in the significance attached to the conferences by the governments. They have been subjected to criticism and cynicism on the ground that they are mainly social meetings, that the resolutions are forgotten and not ratified, or that they are designed merely to promote American trade. Even if the last purpose were a general objective, and trade has occasionally been a motive, it would afford no justifiable criticism. But the criticism is hardly valid in any event. Such congresses always pass more resolutions than are acted upon. They are intended not necessarily to produce immediate action, but to create public opinion which, if favorable, may result in subsequent action. They have done much to promote international cooperation on this continent, in legal, commercial, and cultural matters, such as extradition, neutrality, rights of aliens, uniformity of commercial legislation, arbitration, conciliation, and other matters susceptible to uniformity within, or cooperation among, nations. They have dealt helpfully with patent, copyright, and trade-mark protection, though slowly, because of the backwardness of some countries in recognizing trade-marks as the property of the owner instead of the property of the first registrant. They have done valuable work in laying the foundation for reductions of tariffs, for the practical administration of the most-favored-nation

clause in ways promotive of trade, in opposing trade barriers and quotas. They have established agencies of various kinds, largely, but not exclusively, vested in the Pan American Union, to supervise the administration and observance of the agreements concluded. In the matter of peace machinery, they have taken practical steps far more likely—as will be set forth more fully hereafter—than the mechanism established in Europe to prove effective, though the European example has necessarily exerted important influence on American institutions.

Some idea of the vast range of matters now of common interest on the American continents, and which require uniform or cooperative regulation, may be gained from the resolutions concluded at the seventh Pan American Conference, held at Montevideo in 1933. These may be divided into three groups: economic, commercial, financial; legal; administrative. Reference will also be made to other conferences of special character and interest, all of which indicate the present scope of American co-operation. Not all these resolutions will be carried into immediate effect, but they indicate the field of interest and the direction which co-operation will take.

In the economic, commercial, and financial field, perhaps the most ambitious project looks to the creation, by the third Pan American Financial Conference, at Santiago de Chile, of an inter-American organization of economic and financial cooperation, to have a board of directors composed of the delegates of governments, a consulting economic commission of experts which shall study all eco-

nomic problems of inter-American character, and an inter-American bank which shall exercise the functions of a central continental bank, primarily to regulate credit and currency.

In the more immediate field of commercial regulation and administration, resolutions were passed and largely put into effect to protect patents (Washington Convention of 1929) and trade-marks (Havana Convention of 1928), with central bureaus of registration. Copyright has not been so well protected in America as it is under the Berne (1876) and Rome (1928) Conventions, but resolutions were adopted at Montevideo looking to the harmonizing of American practice with those Conventions by treaty. Committees were appointed to draft a uniform code on bills of exchange, following the Hague and Geneva rules, and on bills of lading, to follow the Hague rules and the Brussels Convention.

Several conferences have dealt with the unification and simplification of customs procedure and port facilities. It was recommended that import quotas be a matter of treaty regulation, that no import prohibition be made effective under the guise of sanitary measures or otherwise without prior consultation, except in emergencies. The Conference adopted another resolution to abolish import and export prohibitions, as well as to reduce tariffs, trade barriers, and quotas, as did the Geneva Convention of 1927. Whether this resolution will be carried out will probably depend on economic development and cooperation, but while there is only one great industrial country in America, the

psychology, in contrast to that of Europe, favors accord. While the Conference favored the unconditional most-favored-nation form of commercial treaty, it nevertheless proposed that the clause should not be taken advantage of against nations signing a multilateral trade preference treaty, and the United States, through Secretary Hull, has indicated its intention of adhering to this resolution. Customs unions are also facilitated by the agreement not to take advantage of most-favored-nation clauses in the case of such unions being between neighboring countries.

The insurance business is so fiduciary, and the necessity of controlling it in the public interest is so great, that a resolution was adopted providing for uniformity in the administration of it, as to the companies that may engage therein, the capital they must possess, standards of accounting, reserves, investment premium rates, and the competitive conditions to be observed as to discounts, commissions, exemptions, contracts, etc., all designed to insure a stable and sound business operated in the interest of the insured and of the public generally.

Further pledges were laid to promote commercial arbitration along the line of the agreement between the Buenos Aires and United States Chambers of Commerce, in accordance with which an Inter-American Commercial Arbitration Commission, with national boards, has just been established. It was further agreed to work for the stabilization of currency and a common monetary system, to promote the industrial and agricultural use of interna-

tional rivers, to promote fluvial navigation and a Pan American railway.

In the more strictly legal field, numerous resolutions evidence the growing interest in helpful cooperation in the promotion of law as the most durable cement in the social structure. Conventions were signed, and are already partly ratified, on the nationality of women, the main purpose of which is to eradicate legal distinctions based on sex; on naturalization (without modifying the Rio de Janeiro Convention of 1906), providing for clarity in determining the effect of naturalization on the old nationality; on extradition, designed to clarify the cases when surrender will and will not be made; on political asylum, amending the Havana Convention of 1928, designed to make clear that it is to be confined only to political offenders, not to offenders against ordinary law, and only for humanitarian reasons; on the teaching of history, according to which textbooks are to be revised to avoid affront to foreign nations and to cultivate harmony and concord, and providing for the supervision of the execution of the Convention by founding an Institute for the Teaching of History in Buenos Aires (an effort along similar lines in Europe might have more practical effect on peace than the measures adopted on that continent to "enforce" peace); a protocol additional to the general conventions on inter-American Conciliation, designed to supplement the conciliation conventions of 1923 (Gondra Treaty) and 1929 (Washington), by which machinery was created to bring into instant operation a selected com-

mission of conciliation, different for each set of countries involved, in the event of differences arising between or among countries susceptible to conciliatory pacification; and a convention on the rights and duties of states which had a more platonic character, and was designed to emphasize certain principles of international law rooted in the legal equality of states.

In addition, numerous resolutions were adopted looking toward future conventions or appropriate changes in civil law, e.g. a recommendation on the civil and political rights of women, based on the principle of equality with men; an agreement to undertake a study of the Brazilian Civil Code in comparison with other American codes, with a view to the unification of civil legislation; a resolution that the Pan American Union appoint a commission of five experts to draft a project for the simplification and unification of powers of attorney and the legal personality of foreign corporations, with a view to eradicating local differences; changes in penal law concerning pilferage from vessels in port and for offenses committed on board aircraft. It was further agreed to submit to the International Commission of American Jurists, established at Rio de Janeiro in 1906, certain subjects, such as "Treaties and their Interpretation," "Determination of the Aggressor and Condition of Neutrals" (the former probably a metaphysical quest), and the important subject of "International Responsibility of States" for denial of justice to aliens, a matter on which Latin American countries are extremely sensitive, and on which, on every possible occa-

sion, they reiterate their fundamental view that a foreigner can have no greater rights than a national, that equality of rights is the maximum grantable, that local remedies must be exhausted as a condition of diplomatic protection, except in case of manifest denial or delay of justice—all of which failed of codification at the Hague in 1930 because of the opposition of numerous countries, including several in Latin America, but which is again commended to the Codification Commission set up at Montevideo.

Elaborate plans were laid for the progressive codification of international law in America, somewhat along the lines adopted at Geneva, which led to the Hague Codification Conference of 1930. From a panel of five appointed by each country, a body of seven experts is to be selected to determine a list of subjects ripe for codification; they are to function under the jurisdiction of the International Commission of Jurists provided for at the Rio de Janeiro Conference, are to prepare drafts and bases of discussion, with a view to eliciting an expression of opinion from the nations of the proposals of the Commission and the questions of law to be presented for discussion, out of which the materials for a codification conference may be evolved. The commission will have the advantage of profiting from the experience of the Hague Codification Conference, and of the more closely knit views entertained by the Latin American countries. It is here that the United States will have to fortify its position effectively, for on some topics the United States's interpretation of rules of law differs from that of several Latin American countries, and where

the conflict is clear the United States may be greatly outvoted. Flexibility of statesmanship will be needed to bring about an assimilation of views on several subjects. The plans for codification are complicated, and no early results can reasonably be expected.

The resolution of the Conference to the effect that it is not considered possible to codify the subject of territorial waters may seem strange, but is the result of the experience of the Hague Conference, where several states refused to concede that three miles was the legal limit of territorial waters, but insisted on a wider strip, which the larger maritime nations opposed.

The resolutions on administrative matters cover a range so wide as hardly to admit detailed examination in this article. A mere recital of the more important resolutions will indicate how many subjects have been recognized as matters of common interest to the American countries. Resolutions were passed urging the signature of peace instruments and providing for supervision of their ratification; the Pan American Union was authorized to stimulate and expedite the ratification and execution of the resolutions and recommendations of the Conference by forming local Pan American committees for this purpose, with jurisdiction in the Union to attempt to resolve objections and reservations, and to recommend changes to future conferences. Every six months they are to submit a chart showing the ratifications, reservations, accessions, etc. The Union is to prepare projects for American conferences of the future.

For the improvement of social conditions, a Labor Office is to be established at Buenos Aires, on the order of the International Labor Office at Geneva. Resolutions were adopted on improved housing, on pure foods and drugs, with a model milk ordinance and a sanitary code, to be supervised by the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, with uniform types and standards; an anti-tuberculosis campaign was agreed upon, with national committees in each country, and including exchange of information and standards of treatment. There was recommended an endowment of institutions teaching housing and living conditions. A campaign against unemployment was initiated, with cooperativism as the keynote, and providing respect for the family, for private property, and individual rights, and supporting unionism; they recommended the establishment of an Institute of Cooperativism and Syndicalism. Agrarian reform was to be promoted by a congress to study rural life, improving the conditions of the working classes, with minimum wage, social insurance, etc. A campaign against the locust was projected, and a campaign against leprosy, with an international center of administration at Rio de Janeiro. It was recommended that the convention prohibiting the traffic in drugs, signed at Geneva in 1931, be ratified by the American countries.

In the cultural field, an American bibliography was suggested, to take account of the literary production in America, with book indexes and exchange, a catalogue, inter-library loans, legislative information, uniform classification, cooperation of the book trade, a directory of

American libraries, and an exemption of books from customs duties or taxes. Two notable American bibliographers, the late José Toribio Medina of Chile and Gabriel René Moreno of Bolivia, were memorialized. Archaeological research was to be promoted, and the preservation of monuments to be cared for. The Roerich Pact, to preserve monuments in time of danger, was approved. The condition of intellectual workers was to be studied, with a view to improvement. Artistic exchange was to be promoted by circulating exhibitions. The perpetuation of Inca lore was to be safeguarded. Resolutions were further passed for the promotion of tourism, with provision for tourist passports, to be issued gratis. Inter-American aviation was to be promoted. The appointment of women as delegates was to be encouraged. Pensions for journalists were to be studied, with a view to provision therefor.

These resolutions manifest a widespread interest in the promotion of social, cultural, and health relations by co-operative activity. The range of common interest is further indicated by the number of special and technical conferences which the Montevideo Conference brought into being or assigned work to. A Conference of Rectors, Deans, and Educators is convening this year, in succession to a 1930 conference, to discuss further the interchange of professors and experts. An Institute of Inter-American Intellectual Cooperation, to arrange tours and student-exchange was established. In the Pan American Union, a division of technical and scientific exchange is to be set up. The economic defense of the American countries through

common agrarian activities was to be promoted. An Inter-American Labor Conference at Buenos Aires was projected. The Child Welfare Conference of Lima (1930) is to be perpetuated by the formation of an Inter-American institute.

Other conferences continued or provided were the Seventh Pan American Sanitary Conference at Havana, the Third Pan American Red Cross Conference, the Second Inter-American Conference of Agriculture, the Third Pan American Financial Conference, and the Fourth Pan American Commercial Conference. This Commercial Conference, to be held at Buenos Aires, probably in 1935 or 1936, is to follow the Financial Conference at Santiago de Chile, and is to deal with the further facilitation of commerce and travel. An Inter-American Bibliography Commission was established, and a committee appointed to draft a copyright convention, and report to the Pan American Union for transmission to the governments.

The fact that the American continents are underpopulated, that the economic interests of the countries do not seriously conflict, that they have few rivalries of more than passing implication, and no historic feuds, are all circumstances making it unnecessary for them to entertain or acquire deep-seated obsessions founded on fear and distrust, or to prepare by large armaments against war. The political atmosphere is conducive to peace. Their conflicts have, in the main, been disputes over territorial boundaries, and only in a few cases have they proved incapable of adjudication by arbitration. The Tacna-Arica

and Chaco conflicts are quite out of the American tradition. As early as 1889 and 1901, the American countries, with only one dissent, agreed on the doctrine of the non-recognition of territorial conquests, thus anticipating, and with more practical hope of realization, the more modern European commitments to like effect—adopted after one of the great conquests of history had just been accomplished. They succeeded in having the Hague Conference of 1907 write into a convention their demand that contract debts shall never be collected by force unless arbitration is refused. The qualification tends to weaken the practical effects of the convention, for a country owing a debt may admit its obligation, but plead inability to pay, and for that reason refuse arbitration. But the convention, though negative in form, has probably had little opportunity for application, notwithstanding the fact that some Latin American countries have not escaped the worldwide fashion, whether necessary or not, of failing to pay debts. The obligation of contract has suffered, like other civilized instruments, from recent inroads on western conceptions.

At Santiago in 1923 and at Havana and Washington in 1928 and 1929, elaborate conventions were drafted for the conciliation and arbitration of disputes in the Americas. These are to be supplemented by elaborate peace codes offered at Montevideo by Mexico, and the year before by the Argentine Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Carlos Saavedra Lamas. They are all designed to make war in

America less possible by promoting conciliation and arbitration.

The same interests have preoccupied Europe since 1919, and even before, and the question may be asked whether the American devices are to be marked by the same failure which has characterized the European efforts. The chances are that they will have better success, because they are not founded, like the European schemes, on what may be called hypocrisy. European devices of late years have been motivated by two divergent objectives, which could hardly survive simultaneously, namely, the desire to preserve the adventitious status quo of 1919, and the desire to prevent the outbreak of war. The first objective was clothed in the language of peace, but all the paraphernalia of threat and war were assembled to carry it out, by war against the "aggressor" who had the temerity to challenge the permanence of the arrangement, and by threat and enforcement of boycott. The moral supporters of peace were enlisted in the enforcement of this program, and were thereby inevitably associated with the psychology of making war to preserve peace, a paradox which has brought to the world a poisonous atmosphere threatening to erupt into violence at any moment. The theory of enforcing peace is so oblivious to the experience of history and to human nature in the mass, that it is regrettable that so much effort has been expended on its development and elaboration. One can only hope that it has not damaged the peace movement beyond repair. It is founded on essential error, and has played directly into the hands of

those militarists whose main object in life is to enforce the Treaty of Versailles and its analogues by the united armed force of the western world. What they want is allies for the wars which they realize those treaties invite, and their conception of peace is the maintenance of their military supremacy. To have enlisted the peace sentiment of the United States in such an effort challenges the perspicacity of its votaries, and again exemplifies the triumph of hope over experience. By promoting the theory of "collective enforcement" of "peace," they necessarily deprecate the possibility of remaining neutral in a foreign struggle, and hence have unwittingly employed all the moral, intellectual, and financial power available to them to justify American intervention in the late European holocaust, which many still seem to believe has promoted order and peace. I venture to submit that we shall be fortunate if the western order has not thereby been fatally undermined, for at the moment it seems doubtful whether Europe can recover its balance. As some have said, if Europe permits itself to drift into another war, a train of events will be started, the outcome of which is incalculable, and hardly promises constructive achievement. How much the war, the treaties, and the post-war policies have had to do with this result we shall not now speculate upon.

These facts are mentioned for two reasons: to show to what extent the American countries, most of them members of the League of Nations, have felt impelled to follow the League principles in the establishment of their

own peace machinery, and to show how far they have consciously departed therefrom. The fundamental fact which appears from a study of all the American peace plans, expressly recorded in the Havana Convention, is that the American countries do not contemplate that they will "enforce" the peace they enjoin upon themselves. They contemplate that if the peace is broken, they will not intervene to help one side against the other, collectively or otherwise, in the name of war or peace, and that the non-participants will remain strictly neutral. Judging by past experience, this exhibits statesmanship, for however seductive the theory of collective intervention of all against one or some may sound, it has no practical value in promoting peace, partly because the people of the different countries of the world cannot be committed to foreign political enterprises with any assurance of success.

It is therefore regrettable that the Mexican Peace Code follows the European pattern implied in the Kellogg-Briand Pact, of condemning only "wars of aggression" in their mutual relations. Given the favorable circumstances of this continent, why not condemn all wars without exception? To renounce "wars of aggression" only is not very encouraging, though it is possible that the Mexican definition of aggression—declaring war, commencing an invasion even against ships, commencing a blockade, aiding revolutionary elements—may limit the range of ambiguity. How successful will be the effort to limit the effects and not touch causes cannot yet be determined, but in Europe, non-aggression pacts cannot be said to

have allayed the resentments which made the pacts themselves seem necessary. Yet it may be admitted freely that any attempt to postpone open hostilities should be welcome, for time may always bring appeasement and wisdom.

The Mexican Peace Code, like the more limited one of Argentina, looks to the strengthening of conciliation by the establishment of permanent commissions of conciliation and arbitration, the exceptions to which are now greatly limited, and to the establishment of an American Court of International Justice of twenty-two members, on the model of the Permanent Court established by the Covenant of the League. The Mexican draft follows to a considerable extent the European model, having thus the advantage of experience, and constituting to that extent an improvement; but by setting up parallel organizations it perhaps also contemplates the possibility of a breakdown in the European arrangement, in which event America will not be left without similar institutions.

In place of the separate bilateral conciliation commissions for each country established by previous American treaties, including the Gondra (Santiago de Chile) treaty, Mexico proposes a permanent international commission of twenty-one members, with an executive committee of five, to whom all disputes shall be referred, and which may take the initiative in bringing the disputants together. The Conciliation Commission is to act as an investigating body, but its recommendations, to be made promptly, are not judicial decisions. Like all conciliation commissions, it will

function in the main where the issues are political, economic, and psychological rather than legal, though provision is made for segregating issues susceptible of judicial determination, and persuading the parties to submit these to arbitration or to the Court.

Arbitration has heretofore been weakened by the range of exceptions attached to the obligation to arbitrate, namely, questions of national honor, vital interest or independence, or the interest of third parties. These are broad enough to exclude from the obligation anything important which either nation prefers not to submit. At Havana and Washington, the exceptions were limited to two, those included in the domestic jurisdiction of either party and not governed by international law, and those affecting the interests of third parties. This doubtless restricts the exceptions, but how effective the limitation will be remains to be seen. Mexico has followed largely the Washington (1929) draft, except that the Arbitral Tribunal does not appear to be given any opportunity to formulate the issue in case the parties cannot. A tribunal of five is to function in each case, two to be appointed by each country, and the fifth by agreement, or in case of disagreement, by the governing board of the Pan American Union, acting by two-thirds majority. Decisions are to be made by "law and comity" instead of the usual "law and equity." Just what comity means here, or whether this is a correct translation from the Spanish, is not clear.

The American Court of International Justice is to sit in two banks of eleven each, one a court of first instance

and one a court of appeal. Like the Hague Court, they are to have obligatory jurisdiction under the terms of Article 36 of the Statute of the Permanent Court, and the sources of law listed in Article 38. The members of the Court are to have five-year terms. They are to give advisory opinions to the Pan American Union, or to any signatory of the Convention. A detailed procedure, following closely the Permanent Court model, is provided for.

This outline of the cooperative efforts of the Americas to regulate matters of common interest indicates advances in effective organization and in promotion of the general welfare. Endowed by nature and man with unparalleled assets, there is no reason why the countries of America cannot look forward hopefully to the future.

# LEARNING TO THINK INTERNATIONALLY

*by Eduard C. Lindeman*

DESPITE the difficulties involved in taking a miscellaneous group of Americans to Mexico for study purposes, there can no longer be any doubt regarding the explicit and implicit advantages of such a procedure. The Seminar in Mexico allows its participants to experience Mexico. To experience means more than "to think" about Mexico. Thinking, as one of the elements in experience, performs two functions: it may be either a ghostly rehearsal for future action or a manner of rationalizing past activities in order to give them meaning within the context of a coherent whole. Perhaps its most important function relates to feeling. Through a tested process of thinking we may be enabled to correct former judgments, and at the same time learn how to readjust our sentiments and feelings. But both thinking and feeling become concrete in the form of action. Thus it is probably more appropriate to say that Americans who attend the Seminar in Mexico wish to learn how to act with respect to Mexico.

The patterns of behavior which lead toward or away from international peace and understanding are in one sense a reflection of underlying cultural forces. Admittedly, relations between the United States and Mexico have been marked by tensions, frictions, and conflicts. His-

torically considered, the relations between the two countries are a reflection of two key-ideas which dominated life in the United States during the major portion of the Nineteenth Century. During this period of almost incredible material expansion, Americans were driven by the incentives of acquisition and organization. To the leaders of that period, Mexico presented itself as both an opportunity and a barrier. Insofar as there was anything in Mexico which stimulated our acquisitiveness, we were moved toward possession and exploitation; to the extent that we came to regard ourselves as efficient exploiters of a continent, Mexico appeared as the antithesis of organized effort. Thus it has come about that Mexico has been a factor in the moral equation of the United States for more than a century. Thoreau refused to pay his taxes, and suffered jail on account of his disapproval of our war with Mexico. His fellow-townsman, Emerson, was moved to unaccustomed bitterness in describing the pro-war party:

“But who is he that prates  
Of the culture of mankind,  
Of better arts and life?  
Go, blindworm, go,  
Behold the famous States  
HARRYING MEXICO  
With rifle and with knife!”

But a new cultural epoch is dawning. Acquisitiveness, competitiveness, and organization no longer stand at the

forefront of our hierarchy of values. We live in a revolutionary period of history, and we already begin to see, though through a glass darkly, that the coming age will require of us new incentives and fresh goals. We now recognize the necessity of building habit-patterns which will make it both desirable and congenial to relate our fractional lives in terms of a unifying frame of reference. But to relate means to participate, and we are therefore engaged in the search for ways of bringing nations into peaceful relationships with each other by processes of mutual participation. I, for one, assume that those of us who, for example, attend the Seminar in Mexico are thus motivated. If this assumption seems too comprehensive and too generous, I can only plead on behalf of reasoning which proceeds from my desires. At any rate, we are now confronted with the task of appraising this type of experience, and I trust that the foregoing introductory remarks may be regarded as suitable for some, if not all, of us.

Any fair-minded person who lives in Mexico for a short period of time will find, I feel certain, that his impressions do not constitute a clear pattern of form. He will be left with many "buzzing confusions." This should not be an unexpected result, since Mexico is a land of contrast and paradox. Glowing idealisms are matched by placid acceptance of public corruption; privilege, luxury, and riches glare forth here and there from a background of poverty; pride stands by the side of degradation; aspiration is met by lassitude; modernity pushes its way through primitive settings; and the almost ineffable beauty of the

landscape and its people softens, but does not cover, a pervasive ugliness. The very sovereignty of Mexico can be found only by piecing together the multiple sources of power—civil, economic, military, racial, and familial. Here, then, is “confusion worse confounded,” or—to be more familiar—a confounded confusion. Has such an experience as the Seminar in Mexico aided us in clarifying any of these confusions, or in resolving any of the paradoxes?

My answer to the above query is an unmistakable affirmative. I see, first of all, that the same dynamic forces which are causing a breakdown of imperialistic economics throughout the world are at work in Mexico. Consequently, I recognize many of Mexico's paradoxes as inherent in the larger revolutionary movements of our time. But, most significant of all, I have come to see and appreciate a gallant people striving heroically to rid themselves of the tyranny of a powerful land-owning class, to shake off the shackles of an equally powerful and reactionary Church, and to free themselves from the bondage of foreign capitalists. Contemporary Mexico becomes, I believe, a sensible pattern only when viewed as a country involved in a gigantic revolution. It is too early to prophesy the precise direction of this revolution; it stands at this moment at a precarious point, and to many it seems that its revolutionary fervor has greatly lessened, that a trend toward the “right” may be anticipated. This may happen, but I believe that a rightward tendency will be, if it comes at all, temporary. In fact, it is my belief that Mexico may

easily become the first socialized state in this hemisphere. But, again, my wishes may outrun the facts. Certainly there are many evidences on every hand to indicate that the revolution is incomplete, that it has, in some respects, stopped at dead center. On the other hand, the forces which might complete the revolution are still resident in both the Mexican folk and in the country's situation. Unless a much larger middle class than at present exists can be suddenly created, it is my expectation that the revolution will continue until a relatively high degree of socialization is achieved. It is this belief which constitutes the starting-point for the clarification I have achieved through my participation in the Seminar in Mexico.

If the Revolution is to be taken as the key to an understanding of Mexico, our next task is to sort out from the accumulation of our experiences those elements which help us to understand transitions and trends in Mexican life. We of the Seminar have enjoyed face-to-face contacts with Mexican leaders and interpreters; we have viewed the land from the points of view of the archaeologist, the ethnologist, the economist, the artist, the legalist, the literary critic, and the historian. What factors in this mixture of contacts emerge to aid us in now viewing Mexico as a country moving in certain directions? From the list of my impressions and notes I select seven elements: (1.) the transition from culture to civilization, or from folk to city; (2.) the recessive barriers of race; (3.) economic planning; (4.) the functional or pragmatic developments in politics; (5.) self-conscious art; (6.) the instrumental

conception of education; and (7.) the will toward international peace.

This is not, obviously, the place to discuss these elements of change, and as a matter of fact, the diligent reader will find illuminating discussions of each point somewhere in the pages of this volume. Before passing on to other matters, however, it should be remarked that most of these ingredients of a more comprehensive social change are the consequence of similar forces operating throughout the world, and in ascending intensity, namely Education, Science, Technology, Industry, Secularism, and Improved Communication and Transportation. It has become convenient to group all of these movements under the symbolic title of The Machine. While this, like all other symbolism, may be slightly misleading, it nevertheless leaves the most vivid impression. Mexico is becoming a part of the Machine Age, and this fact raises numerous questions of peculiar importance to interpreters of social process. One query of this sort, by way of illustration, has been running through my mind since my stay in Mexico: What advantage accrues to countries where the Machine appears relatively late?

To me, Mexico appears as a portent, a sign for the future. I went to Mexico to learn about Mexico, but have thereby learned considerable about myself and my country. I see more clearly than ever before that revolutions are not consummated in the minds of men, or realized in plans and schemes. In all revolutions, especially as viewed at first hand, there is something of the superficial, some-

thing amateurish and even a bit absurd. But the true revolution is not to be discovered at these surface points; the real revolution can be seen only in the relations between human beings. The Mexican Revolution is, at bottom, an attempt to eliminate an entire structure of mechanical, and therefore evil, relationships between persons. The type-form of mechanical relationship is that of master to slave. Its primary process is that of command and obedience. In such a relationship there is no true growth, not even for those who seize power and command. As I see it, the Mexicans are now striving to achieve a new set of organic human relationships, that is, relationships characterized by the fact that energies are exerted on behalf of common goals. Although the term must be utilized in a figurative sense, Mexico is attempting to build a "social organism" out of parts now associated merely through space and time.

In this respect, Mexico is no different from other peoples of the modern world who, finding their experiences unreal and fractional, are also on the march toward cultural unity. But what makes the Mexican movement so intensely fascinating is the rise to cultural significance of its native Indians. Here one enters upon problems and speculations which are exceedingly complex and subtle. I content myself with a single affirmation: the settled Indian of the Mexican village is still capable of experiencing the essence of unity; he is possessed of natural pride; his interactions with his natural environment produce an equation which is often utilitarian, but almost never fails to be

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esthetic; he may still carry his burdens on his back, but in his heart there resides the long memory of freedom and independence; and since it is this Mexican Indian who stands at the center of the current Revolution, he is sure to give the ensuing culture its dominant qualities.

Although my outlook on life does not emanate from economic materialism, I am prepared to grant that at this particular juncture in history our cultural possibilities are strictly conditioned by economic factors. The Mexican problem is at bottom a problem of stark economic reality. But there are two approaches to the study of economics, one proceeding from things and the other from persons. Speaking strictly, I presume that it is fair to say that there can be no such entity as a purely economic problem, that is, a problem adhering to things as such. Underneath every so-called economic problem lies the more fundamental problem of human relatedness. The so-called law of supply and demand presupposes those who supply and those whose need leads to demand. Throughout the discussions of the Seminar in Mexico, I was delighted with the Mexican approach to economic reality. We observed a consistent attitude on the part of the Mexicans, a refusal to state their economic problems in other than humanistic terms. Over and over they reiterated their underlying conception, their consistent query which may be stated thus: We have seen that economic exploitation leads to wealth, at least for the exploiters; what we now wish to know is whether or not it is possible to organize an economic system which leads toward human welfare.

When transmuted into an end, the desire for peace is destined to become an illusion. Peace is not an end; it is merely a mode of life which becomes possible after other conditions have been met. For example, there can be no peace so long as one person or one group manipulates another person or another group on behalf of goals which are not mutually conceived. Many visitors to Mexico from the United States presume to know what is "good" for the Mexicans. This very attitude of mind stands as a barrier to peace. Speaking bluntly and crudely, what is or is not "good" for the Mexicans is none of our business. Our concern should be directed, not toward "good" for Mexicans, but rather toward the potential "good" in our relations with Mexico. And here we have but one sure guide: we can help Mexico, and through Mexico the world, toward peace only by insisting upon justice. In saying this I do not assume that the rules of justice are easily determined. In the tangled web of law and ownership, of possession and use, of national sovereignty and corporate right, there reside questions of extreme subtlety, and the pathway toward justice is never simple. But even here we are not wholly without guides. In an approximate sense we know that whatever helps Mexico to achieve a higher standard of living, increased autonomy in her own affairs, control over her own destiny, and the opportunity to express her indigenous capacities lies on the side of justice. The nature of these goals must be described by Mexicans themselves; we enter the equation only at those points

where our behavior, both individual and corporate, impinges upon any or all of these considerations.

The new Mexico, I feel certain, will be an influence on the side of international peace. I say this knowing that I should be unable to adduce satisfactory proofs of my affirmation. What stands out preeminently in my consciousness at the moment is not a pattern of facts regarding Mexico, but rather a pattern of feelings. These feelings are not unmixed, but they tend to become organized about a center, a focal point—which is beauty. Here is a country about to enter the fateful stream of modern civilization, with all its accoutrements of science, technology, industry, and sophistication. There may be some who will regard this pressure of events in terms of sentimental regret; they may feel that something precious will be lost when the ancient Indian culture is transmuted into modern civilization; they may believe that the rare beauty which now saturates the Mexican landscape, and which comes forth so naturally in Mexican arts and crafts, will be lost. I do not share these sentiments. There will always be beauty in this land, this land where each child stands in relation to his background as a portrait, this land where the very lights of the sky conspire with mountains and plains to produce a constant stream of symmetry and rhythm. Here beauty shall reign—but why not also free men and free women?

## SOME ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF MEXICO'S SIX-YEAR PLAN

*by Ramón Beteta*

MEXICO has been fertile in revolutionary plans. A “revolutionary plan” has generally preceded not only a true revolution, but even a private revolt. These plans have almost always been a means of criticizing the Government and the dominant group, and of formulating a campaign for overthrowing them. The Six-Year Plan is fundamentally different from these others, not only because it is not a criticism by an opposition, does not attempt the overthrow of any government, but also because it is actually a program of action laid down by the Government and the party in power to guide their future course.

The convention of the National Revolutionary Party, held in Querétaro in November, 1933, approved the Six-Year Plan as a program for the Government during the coming presidential term. General Lázaro Cárdenas, having been chosen as its candidate, appeared before the convention and promised to accept the Plan. It began to be put into effect during 1934, as President Abelardo Rodríguez wished to adopt it during the last year of his term.

Strictly speaking, the Six-Year Plan is not a political platform, used to attract votes, nor a series of more or less vague promises which might shore up the confidence of the Mexican people in the National Revolutionary Party.

On the contrary, the Plan implies self-criticism, a revision of the revolutionary proposals, ideals, and principles. It thus has other importances, the greatest being that of defining, at least in part, the actions of the leaders of the group which has governed the country for twenty years. For the first time in Mexico, the compilers of a plan did not satisfy themselves with the expression of abstract ideals, but proceeded to detail the methods of their carrying-out, means which could convert into realities the principles for which Mexico has been fighting, not only since 1910, but probably since the War of Independence, in 1810.

The formulation of the Six-Year Plan occurred at a particularly opportune moment, when there seemed to be doubt about the fundamental principles of the Revolution, not only among the conservative elements in the country, but also among some of the most distinguished men in the revolutionary group itself. A need was felt to define ideas and map out roads, a feeling to which, no doubt, the political vogue in other countries of a tendency toward planned economy contributed.

To translate into English the 190 pages of the Six-Year Plan in its official edition, and then to give a résumé of them, would be a task beyond the limitations of this article. For that reason, I shall refer to only two of its principal points—the agrarian and labor questions—of special importance in that they treat some of the most fundamental and widely discussed problems of Mexico.

No further discussion is heard in Mexico of the justification of the agrarian policy, or of the unquestionable neces-

sity of giving to the villages the lands of which they were despoiled by force, by deceit, and even by legal procedures of doubtful morality. Nor does anyone defend the *latifundio* system, by means of which two per cent of the population formerly possessed all the land in the country. Nor, finally, does anyone doubt that the agricultural technique of Mexico is extremely backward, and its production too limited to supply the fundamental needs of the population. That which has been the subject of discussion by some writers, of both left-wing and conservative groups, is whether the methods followed in carrying out the agrarian reform have been the best-advised. The policy has been criticized for decreasing, rather than increasing, the agricultural production, for having created a sense of insecurity among the land-workers through fear of red tape, and for not having visibly bettered the level of life of the *peones* and land-workers to whom land has been given. Notwithstanding the fact that these criticisms are justified only in part—it is not certain that the divided land is cultivated less than that still in the hands of small or large private holders, nor that agricultural production has been diminished, since indications exist that it has been augmented—this doubt nevertheless found a place even in the center of the revolutionary group itself.

The argument concerning the insecurity created by the distribution of lands has been repeated whenever the agrarian problem has been discussed. There is no doubt that the division of lands, whether by donation or restitution, has resulted in a modification of the criterion of the

right of private property in Mexico, causing it to be considered as a social function rather than a divine right. It is obvious that large *haciendas* adjacent to centers of population having the right to lands live under the constant menace of being broken up. But this proves only the necessity of arriving at an immediate decision in regard to the agrarian problem, not in the form suggested during the presidency of Ortiz Rubio—that of fixing a limit of time during which the villages might present their petitions—but in that of completing the distribution of all available land, until there remains in Mexico no land-worker lacking a parcel of land from which he can live.

Again, to deny the economic betterment of the *peones* who have received land is to make a foolish, baseless statement, one not seriously to be discussed if one considers the utter lack of statistics relating to the standard of life before and after the distribution of lands. Also, the most superficial observation shows that there has been improvement. But even if that were not true, the change in the people's psychology, from one of well-defined servility to that of the independent land-worker, is an achievement not to be denied.

In view of these discussions and doubts, the National Revolutionary Party, in the Six-Year Plan, formulated its criterion of the agrarian question in the following terms: ". . . Mexico's most important social problem, beyond any doubt, is that relating to the distribution of land and its better exploitation from the point of view of the national interest, which is intimately bound up with the social and

economic liberation of the large group of workers directly employed on the land. . . ." This introduction, recognizing that the agrarian problem has not yet been solved, ends with the following two statements:

First—The giving of lands and waters to all the nuclei of population, without exception, which either lack them or have them in insufficient quantity to satisfy their needs must be continued.

Second—The object of the division of lands is to convert the *peón* into an independent land-worker, able to get the best from his land because he owns it. The only limitation to the division of land should be relative to the small property.

To attain these ends, the Plan proposes various concrete means:

A—To increase the economic and human resources dedicated by the government to the carrying-out of the agrarian measures, changing the National Agrarian Commission into an autonomous Department. At the same time to substitute for the Local Agrarian Commissions, Mixed Agrarian Commissions made up of a representative from the new Department, one from the Governor of the State, and another from the land-workers' organizations. The autonomous Department will have a budget of 4,000,000 *pesos*, instead of the 2,200,000 allotted to the National Agrarian Commission.

B—To simplify the carrying-out of land-transfers, and to give final character to the provisional solutions made to date.

One of the best-founded criticisms which has been made of the agrarian policy deals with its complicated and slow machinery, which always includes two procedures: the first, before the Local Agrarian Commission, which ends with the decree of the Governor of the State, allowing or denying provisional possession; and the second, before the National Agrarian Commission, allowing or denying final possession. Because of this arrangement, there is a period, frequently very prolonged, of insecurity. This period, originally conceived to allow the owners of the land a real opportunity to defend themselves, has in reality only caused uncertainty of rights on the part of both of the owners and the recipients, and has, in consequence, been a general evil.

C—To give the so-called *peones* living on *haciendas* the right to receive lands.

Until now, the law has not considered workers living on *haciendas* to be legal personalities with the right to petition for land. This right has, in reality, been limited to villages, that is to say, to centers of independent population. It was considered unjust that the men working on an enterprise should divide it. With this reservation still in mind, the Six-Year Plan gives these *peones* the right to be included in the agrarian census of neighboring communities, but not that of asking for the lands of the *hacienda* on which they work.

D—To divide the rural holdings of the federal and local Governments, since it is illogical and absurd that a nation acting to end large landholdings should itself be a large

landholder. This concrete means of distributing land has a certain importance, for the federal Government owned, in 1925, lands of an area estimated at 36,600,000 hectares. It should be noted, however, that most of this land is in the States of Guerrero, Campeche, Chiapas, and the Territory of Quintana Roo, that is, in slightly populated places which have been insufficiently explored and surveyed.

E—To subdivide the *latifundios*, whether through their owners, voluntarily, or by forced expropriation, among small land-workers.

The *latifundio* is still the prevailing system in Mexico. Even in the Agricultural Census of 1930 we read that there are in the country 13,444 holdings each larger than 1,000 hectares, having a total area of 102,881,607 hectares, or about 83.48% of the nation's arable land. In this category are included 1,831 holdings each larger than 10,000 hectares, having a total area of 68,743,996 hectares, or about 33% of the nation's whole area. That is to say, in 1930 less than 2,000 persons were owners of one-third of the area of the Republic. There is, then, nothing strange in the desire to divide the land in Mexico.

F—Redistribution of the rural population, creating new agricultural regions. This is included to cover the case of nuclei of population which cannot obtain lands in the region wherein they live, either because such lands do not exist or because they are not subject to division into small properties.

A map of the density of population in Mexico clearly

shows that the majority of our population lives in the high lands of the central plateau, for the States of the North and Southeast show up as sparsely populated. It seems, then, logical to carry out a more adequate distribution of land-workers, sending them into the tropical regions of the coasts and the temperate ones of the north. However, there is nothing more difficult than to withdraw people from the place in which they live, above all when, as in Mexico, one is dealing with indigenous races which have frequently lived in the places they now occupy since before the arrival of the Spaniards in America. Furthermore, the peoples of Mexico are sedentary. Journeys do not appeal to them, and changes of residence are exceptional. The only important recent migrations are the movement toward the United States, the economic causes of which are evident, and those occasioned by the Revolution, which brought out of their mountains and valleys groups of men who, lacking this strong politico-social stimulus, would probably have remained there, as their fathers and grandfathers did.

As a corollary to the redistribution of population, the Six-Year Plan envisages an internal colonization by Mexicans. The sad history of colonizing companies—which, under the pretext of bringing European immigrants, in reality merely monopolized huge *latifundios*—puts this proposal in rather unflattering perspective. Nevertheless, Mexico must solve the problems created by the workers repatriated from the United States who, between 1929 and 1933, increased to 381,644, and who, not having been ab-

sorbed by agriculture, can create an unemployment problem.

G—The last fundamental principle relating to the agrarian problem is the recognition that the division of land, even carried to complete realization, is insufficient completely to solve the agricultural problem. The Plan desires, in addition, an augmentation of production through the helpful organization of communal landholders and land-workers, the introduction of more adequate crops, their rotation, and the general improvement in agricultural technique signified by machinery, fertilizer, profitable use of sub-products, selection of seeds, etc.

To what degree the technique employed in agriculture in Mexico is rudimentary, and how small the returns are in consequence, are demonstrated by the following statistics: of the area under cultivation in the country, which is only 14,500,000 hectares, or 11% of the total area, only 49% was cultivated during the agricultural year 1929-1930, due to the custom of leaving land fallow every third year in order not to sterilize it. It is interesting to note in passing that while the lands cultivated under the system of private property constitute only 48.27% of those in work, in the communally divided lands of the same category 57.35% were cultivated. This would seem to indicate a better use of the communally divided lands than of those still within *haciendas*, this despite the fact that their equipment was insignificant, the Agricultural Census of 1930 showing that the machinery, implements, and instruments utilized by communal landholders was worth

less than 4,000,000 *pesos*. It is evident that with such equipment the yield cannot be abundant. Further, the value of the machinery and implements of all land-workers, excluding the communal landholders, was only about 66,500,000 *pesos*. This helps to explain the small yields obtained in Mexico. Thus, for example, in the country's most important product, maize, Mexico is very low on the scale of yields compared to other nations, producing only 640 kilograms per hectare, while the United States obtains 1,730, Argentina 2,000, and Egypt 2,320. The situation in regard to wheat is no more flattering, for the yield of it in Mexico is 550 kilograms per hectare (average 1924-1928), while that of the United States is 990, Chile 1,170, and Belgium 2,670. To this must be added the fact that the agricultural trinity maize-bean-calabash continues to be the principal cultivation in Mexico.

The Six-Year Plan also proposes concrete ways of obtaining the improvement of agricultural technique: agricultural credit must be increased in usefulness by the help of the state and the development of the banks which to this end have been established around the National Bank of Agricultural Credit, and which, in conformity to what the Plan foresees, must receive from the federal government 50,000,000 *pesos* to be divided among the workers of communal holdings and small land-workers in general, with the aim of social service, rather than that of earning interest.

Besides the development of credit, the Plan suggests the usefulness of organizing the workers of the field into

cooperatives, which would allow them the acquisition of machinery in common, the installation of industrial plants for the transformation of their products, the common use of storehouses, packing-plants, and transportation, a system of insurance, and the organization of common markets.

As, in addition, there is required, for the improvement of agricultural technique, a betterment of the cultural level and the teaching of better methods of cultivation, the Six-Year Plan treats this aspect of the problem in the chapter relating to education, proposing the increase of rural schools, of which it requires the founding of not less than 1,000 in 1934, 2,000 each in 1935, 1936, 1937, and 1938, and 3,000 in 1939, or a total of 12,000 new rural schools.

According to the statistical division of the Department of Public Education, there were, in 1932, 13,719 rural schools, in which case the proposed increase is one of almost 100%. It must be said here that the rural school provides the teaching, not only of writing and reading, but also—and principally—of the essential rules for a more hygienic existence and of practical preparations for the increasing of crop-yields and the standard of life, of the rotation of crops, the selection of seeds, the use of agricultural machinery, the care of animals, and thousands of other details which make life more comfortable in the country.

To sum up, the Six-Year Plan aims, with respect to agriculture, to bring about a more complete, intelligent, and technical cultivation of all the arable land of the

country, this land to be divided into small properties, the owners of which will be organized into cooperatives, as much for the better use of the land and the obtaining of credit as for the use of a common outlet for their products. It follows that the program of the National Revolutionary Party not only respects the small private ownership of land, but has that as its ideal, and thus removes itself definitely from the idea of socialism.

In this aspect of its agrarian policy, the Six-Year Plan puts an end, at least temporarily, to an old ideological dispute, clearly implanted in Mexico after 1925. There have, since, been two tendencies in regard to agrarian matters in revolutionary thought: that which upheld the idea that the divided lands should be the beginning of a communal regime which would be extended to all agriculture until the complete socialization of the land had been achieved, and that which believed that the small communally divided land-holdings should be only a passing step toward the small private holding. Each of these points of view has cited the history of Mexico in its own support. The former pointed to the indigenous groups to whom private ownership of the means of production, and especially of the land, is inconceivable, as they have known no other form of life than the communal. The latter was supported by the history of the northern part of the country, principally on the west coast, in which private enterprise and individualism have been almost the absolute rule. In reality, from the point of view of the economic regime, and even of the attitude of their peoples,

the States of Sonora and Sinaloa have had much in common with the frontier life of the United States. For the inhabitants of those regions, the right of ownership of the land has been the basis of the prosperity and high agricultural level they have enjoyed, particularly since, thanks to irrigation, they have reached a level of development permitting them to export their products to the United States in very considerable quantities, and thus to elevate their standard of life. To this second group, what is objectionable is not the right of private property, but the monopolization of land and the creation of *latifundios*.

The Six-Year Plan decides this argument in favor of this second group, and makes of the communally divided lands a step toward the creation of small proprietors. Even though this solution seems logical when it is remembered that Mexico has not yet emerged from feudalism, and that the regime of capitalism is therefore progress for her, it nevertheless seems too bad to throw away so brilliant an opportunity to initiate a new economic regime in a place where its first foundations are already laid, and in which everything indicates the possibility of its immediate success.

On the other hand, it is not fruitless to observe that the conversion of the divided lands into a temporary step really formulates a criticism of the system of land-division which Mexico has been following, and frankly orients the policy of the government toward a rural bourgeoisie. In this, the Six-Year Plan seems to forget much of the history of Mexico, as well as what is now happening in other

countries, for to preserve the right of private ownership of land, convert it into the legal system, protect it, and make it flower, leaving this instrument of production—the most important, without doubt, in a predominantly agricultural country—in the field of free competition, is dangerous, as nobody and nothing guarantee that it will not return to new forms of concentration and monopoly, as has happened in the past. This without taking into consideration the unsatisfactory experience of capitalist countries, which shows that the small private ownership of the land is not a final solution of the agrarian problem. It would seem more prudent to make permanent and strong a regime which at the present time has such wide horizons before it, which breaks old molds, the injustice and inefficiency of which have been proved, than to return to them, going back to the middle of the road.

With our experience of the communally divided lands in the past fifteen years, and that of the world since the Industrial Revolution, it seems evident that the agrarian policy here should tend toward the abandonment of private ownership of the land, converting the small communal holding into the center of rural economy, instead of making it a means to the creation of an agricultural bourgeoisie which, though new to Mexico, is outworn in the world. It ought to be made a force organizing rural life within a new and proper juridical regime, which would not seek to borrow the old forms of organization within which the *latifundio* system flourished. It should not be forgotten that the history of Mexico repeats itself, and

that after the triumph of a revolution there is frequently an unrecognized return to the methods, procedures, and ideas against which the Revolution was fought. To stop with the distribution of the land, and not to take advantage of the opportunity for its complete socialization, is not only a weakness, but a danger, the danger that in its agrarian aspect the Revolution, having triumphed, will die through not having been carried to its logical conclusion.

As with regard to the agrarian question, so in dealing with labor the Six-Year Plan sets up a general principle which constitutes the ideal of the National Revolutionary Party, and then outlines concrete means which clarify it a little further in its attitude toward the economic conflicts of the world.

The first is expressed as follows: "The National Revolutionary Party recognizes that the masses of laborers and agricultural workers are the most important factor in the Mexican collectivity, and that—despite the prostration in which they have lived—they preserve the highest conception of the collective interest, a circumstance which permits the basing on the proletariat of the hope of making Mexico a great and prosperous country by means of the cultural and economic improvement of the great masses of workers of city and country."

For those who see in Mexico a "red menace," there must be satisfaction in finding that the directing principle of the labor policy, as expressed by the Six-Year Plan, is far from being radical, or from intending a fundamental change in our economic organization. On the contrary,

the ideal—well limited, to be sure—is solely to better the economic and cultural situation of the workers, whom the dominant group in Mexico recognizes as the social element of greatest interest, and who preserve a clear conception of the collective hopes. Certainly the Plan speaks of the prostration in which the proletariat has lived, but it means to have understood that this was caused more by an equivocal political regime than by an economic structure which fatally condemns the laboring groups to that prostration. The principle is, furthermore, too vague to have any great importance. Of more significance are the following propositions, with which the Plan goes on:

I—"Every individual, as a consequence of the obligations society imposes on him to contribute with his energy to the collective development, has a right to the work which permits him to satisfy his needs and honest pleasures."

This is a criticism of the unemployment aspect of the capitalist regime—which has, for some years, constituted an essential characteristic of capitalism. The right and the obligation to work thus expressed are, nevertheless, little more than a beautiful ambition. For that reason, the second principle aims to complete the concept, saying,

II—"The State will intervene, directly or indirectly, to the end that every individual in the Republic be able to exercise his right to work."

Even though the Plan nowhere expresses the concrete means to be used by the government in doing away with unemployment, it at least fixes as a matter for State inter-

vention that of guaranteeing to every man the right to work. It is useful here to note that unemployment has never been very important in Mexico. The 1930 Census showed only 89,690 unemployed persons in a population of 16,500,000 inhabitants. Those later than 1930 do not seem to show any considerable increase in unemployment (250,000 men, more or less, in 1931), notwithstanding the number of repatriated citizens (about 300,000 for 1930 and 1931) and the general conditions of the crisis, which affected Mexico very specially in 1931, above all in mining.

Without doubt, the explanation of this lies in the fact that Mexico is still agricultural, rather than industrial. In effect, according to the 1930 Census, 3,626,278 persons, or 70.2% of the active population of the country, were working in agriculture. In reality, large fluctuations of employment have been noted only in mining. The drop in the prices of metals and the restriction of markets brought about a considerable limitation of production, which left a proportionately high number of workers without employment. But these men were quickly re-absorbed into agriculture, in which, though their standard of living was lowered, they did not have to live on public or private charity. On the other hand, industry in Mexico does not need, as that of other countries needs, the pressure which armies of men without work exercise upon those who have employment, in view of which the low level of life of agricultural workers and the system of exploitation under which they have lived guarantee to the

industrialists a supply of hands as abundant and continuous as they desire.

The next concrete proposal of the Six-Year Plan says:

III—"The dispositions of Articles 27 and 123 of the Federal Constitution will be enforced until they constitute an integral reality in our social affairs, and with respect to their enforcing laws it will be watched that they do not weaken the nationalist spirit and the profoundly human tendency which animates those precepts."

Article 27 deals only indirectly with the labor question, as it treats of the distribution of lands and waters and with the nationalization of the subsoil. On the other hand, Article 123 establishes the bases of the Labor Code, and fixes a series of protections for the worker, such as the eight-hour day, the protection of women, the prohibition of child-labor, the minimum wage, the six-day week, the wage for overtime, the fixing of the responsibility for accidents as that of the employer, in accord with the theory of professional risk, the right to strike, etc. These guarantees still constitute the ideal of our dominant political group, which desires only that they come to be realities, having recognized that these principles have remained, at least in part, dead letters within the Constitution and the Labor Code.

Of all the guarantees established in Article 123, that referring to a minimum wage is, by its character, one of the most difficult to enforce. General Abelardo Rodríguez directed his energies to converting it into a reality from the time before he was elected President, and something

has been accomplished, at least insofar as fixing precisely what should be, in money, the minimum wage in various municipalities of the country. Thus there has been brought out of the vague place in which the Constitution placed it the problem of establishing that the minimum wage is "that which is considered sufficient, taking into consideration the conditions of each region, to satisfy the normal necessities of the worker's life, his education, and his honest pleasures, considering him as the head of a family," and the first indicative step has been taken toward an elevation of the actual wage.

Entering now upon more concrete terrain, the Six-Year Plan fixes the fourth point in regard to labor: "The collective bargaining of wage-earners will be urged, with a tendency toward making it the only, or at least the preponderant, form of establishing relations between owners and workers, to which effect it will be imperative to include in the collective contracts of labor the clause by which the owner is obliged not to admit non-syndicalized elements."

This principle decides the old fight between individual and collective bargaining in favor of the latter, with a tendency toward the formation of special syndicates in each enterprise. Its aim is, without doubt, to strengthen the syndical organizations, as the Plan later states with all clarity.

After repeating, as point five, the necessity to protect the worker, to guarantee him a minimum wage and se-

curity in his job, the Plan sets forth its sixth principle in regard to labor:

"Confronting the class struggle inherent in the system of production in which we live, the Party and the Government have the duty of contributing to the strengthening of the syndical organizations of the working classes. . . ."

It is not, then, the intention of the Six-Year Plan to do away with the class struggle, since that would carry the Government fatally in the direction of fascism. On the contrary, it recognizes as essential within the capitalist regime—the existence of which it does not at the moment seem to wish to destroy—the struggle of the two social classes created by the right of private property: those who possess the instruments of production, and the proletariat. In this struggle the Party does not remain neutral, but frankly decides in favor of the workers, implying its desire to do away with, not the class struggle, but the classes themselves, by means of a growth of the proletariat, since to strengthen one of two contenders logically means to look forward to the weakening and final overthrow of the other.

From this short survey of the agrarian and labor sections of the Six-Year Plan the following conclusions are derived:

First—The aim of the Six-Year Plan was the definition of the principles animating the present Government, and which are to serve as guide to action during the next presidential period (December, 1934 to December, 1939,

the Plan having gone into effect during the previous presidency). These principles are those expressed in the Constitution of 1917, but which have not yet been converted into realities.

Second—Notwithstanding the evident vagueness of many of its sections, the Six-Year Plan has great importance because it plots out, for the first time in the history of Mexico, the road which the Government will follow, with principles fixed in advance, during a given period of time.

Third—Despite the intention to go into detail which is generally notable throughout the Plan, a good part of it contains only general principles, suggestions, and good intentions, the realization of which will depend more on those charged with putting it into practice than on the original intention of its authors.

Fourth—The authors of the Six-Year Plan made a conscientious effort to avoid fascism in those cases in which their desire to achieve a planned and directed economy constituted a danger of inclining toward the corporative state; and

Fifth—The Six-Year Plan is not revolutionary in the sense in which that word is used outside Mexico. That is, it does not pretend to set forth a radical change in the economic organization of the country. Its radicalism is verbal only, since—as much in the suggestions embodied in the sections studied in this article as in those relative to the national economy—it is clear that the Party still respects and protects the right of private property, na-

tionalism, and the private enterprise, and is thus very far from proposing a socialism analogous to that of Soviet Russia.

The explanation of this is very simple. The Mexican Revolution has kept an ambition, on one hand, to bring the country out of an oppressive feudalism into a semi-liberal bourgeois state and, on the other hand, to direct it further along the way toward scientific socialism. The exterior pressure, the conservative interests, and the very history of the country have delayed the realization of the second part of this change, preventing the speed and comprehensiveness which some of the leaders have desired. I believe, nevertheless, that Mexico, precisely because it finds itself in the period of pre-capitalist transition, is in a position favorable to the finding of a more human and just system of economic relations by means of the intelligent intervention of a government with working-class interests able—lacking fatal friction with that capitalist imperialism of other countries which could, in one moment, put an end to the Mexican experiment and even to our very national existence—to serve as a regime in transition toward a society without classes which in our day is the condition nearest to ideal in the economic relations of men.

## THE SIX-YEAR PLAN: A CRITICISM

*by Chester Lloyd Jones*

PROGRAMS for future national developments have become so common in the distressful years through which the world is passing that they have ceased to be a novelty. Almost every forward-looking political community has one, if not formulated in a single document, then in a wide variety of experiments not closely supplementary, but looking toward a new day in which at least some of the problems which confront the nation shall have reached a happy solution.

The projects vary greatly in what they aim to accomplish. They range from schemes to abolish poverty to more modest arrangements for merely balancing the budget. Some are political platforms to which the candidates of a party pledge themselves, hoping thereby to win an election; others are ambitious declarations of faith, which have little, if any, relation to passing electoral contests. Among the most far-reaching and sanguine of these programs for future developments is that submitted to the National Revolutionary Party of Mexico at its convention at Querétaro on December 4, 1933.

This document is less a party platform than a reaffirmation of principles, a declaration by Mexican political leaders of their confidence in methods and policies which they

have developed, and an outline of what it is proposed to do before the end of the term of the new President, Lázaro Cárdenas.

The Plan does not rise from an expressed widespread popular demand, though many of its paragraphs reaffirm the established principles which the Revolution supports. It does not draw its importance as a program of action from popular approval or acquiescence in a party contest. There is only one party whose supporters express themselves in numbers in Mexico—the National Revolutionary Party. The returns posted on the Palace of Fine Arts after the election of July 1, 1934, showed 1,091,000 votes for Cárdenas, and 18,000 and 10,000 for his "opponents." Though neither the origin of the Six-Year Plan nor the government which is to carry it out has a "democratic basis" in the sense in which the phrase is ordinarily used, nevertheless the proposed program is properly considered an official plan, if not an expression of the will of the Mexican people, then one of the leaders who assume to speak for them.

Those who are familiar with the last twenty years of Mexican history will expect to find the program highly nationalistic in tone, and in this they will not be disappointed. Political developments in Mexico, as in other countries, have not in recent years always been consistent, but they have very generally worked to emphasize nationalistic ambitions, in which "independence" in social, economic, and political affairs has been sought, rather than the cooperation and interdependence among nations

which was characteristic of the nineteenth century. This is not said in criticism. Mexico, like any other nation, shapes its own policies, wisely or unwisely. If, in the desire to develop nationalistic points-of-view among her people and nationalistic policies in public administration, she exaggerates both to her disadvantage, that is, after all, her own affair. In doing so she is only following examples of the same sort furnished by nations which pride themselves on greater political advance and abilities.

In what follows, there is not, therefore, attempted any criticism of the Six-Year Plan because it is Mexican; nor is any question raised as to the right of those who speak for Mexico to adopt this or an alternative program. What is sought is, briefly, to set out the chief proposals, and to follow each by comment on the factual background which may determine the success which the program will have.

Although redistribution of landed property was not, at the beginning of the Revolution, among the major objects sought, it promptly became one. It is natural that declarations in favor of continuance of this policy find first place in the Six-Year Plan. To a degree, this movement was at first an attempt to redress the results of well-intentioned action which had gone astray. The Liberal leaders of the middle of the nineteenth century believed that the semi-communal method of holding lands prevailing in the Indian villages held back national advance. They believed that granting the lands in fee simple would stimulate the Indian to improve his holdings, and help bring him into the current of modern life, with its higher production and con-

sumption standards. Hence there were included in the Reform Laws of 1857 clauses looking to breaking up the village holdings.

The result was far from what had been expected. The Indians, to a large extent, sold their lands, or lost them through less defensible means adopted by members of more advanced groups in the population. They lost their traditional rights, and became landless laborers. This condition the Revolution has sought to redress. The program has gradually expanded from returning lands to those who had lost them, or to their representatives, by "restitution," to giving lands to new villages by "dotation." Even this standard has become unsatisfactory. The end now sought is still broader—to give lands to all the rural landless. This will be, the Six-Year Plan declares, ". . . the axis of Mexican social questions until . . . the needs of all the country population for lands and waters have been satisfied."

How lands to be taken were to be located, valued, and paid for became from the beginning matters of sharp differences of opinion, in which not only Mexicans, but foreigners as well, became deeply involved. Whether the methods adopted were just to the owners of areas expropriated need not here concern us. It is sufficient to say that payments to the former owners have been negligible in amount, and that if they are ever made by the government—even at valuations comparable to those which have heretofore been accepted by those who have acquiesced in the

government's procedure—they will be a very heavy burden on the Mexican treasury.

Taking of lands from those who have, and giving them to those who have not, has become a recognized Mexican policy which there is no reason to believe will soon be brought to an end. Expropriation began as early as 1915, but has been pushed only since 1925. The areas taken have been chiefly in the central plateau, where the greater part of the population lives, and to which it is so attached that removals into other areas where agriculture could be carried on under contrasted conditions, would admittedly be very difficult. How much has been taken cannot be accurately stated, since possession in many districts has been given to the villages before final adjudication has been made. The announcements of lands adjudicated also show not a little variation. It was stated that on September 30, 1932, some 7,385,882 hectares (roughly 19,500,000 acres) had been definitely awarded, that there were pending cases involving 5,760,583 hectares—this in *El Economista* for December 1, 1932. Later distributions have proceeded at an accelerated rate. Some 859,261 hectares (roughly 2,150,000 acres) were reported as given to the Indians in the first half of 1934.

Nevertheless, land distribution is by no means at an end. Officers of the Mexican Department of Agriculture estimated that by July 31, 1934, some 900,000 grants had been made, but that there were between 1,600,000 and 2,000,000 persons entitled to grants under existing legislation. Apparently the distribution contemplated even under

laws now in force is still less than half done, and the prospects are that the land required is to be still further increased by allotments to country laborers not organized in villages.

The meaning of these figures is appreciated only when the character of Mexican agricultural resources is kept in mind. There are reported to be only between 24,000,000 and 30,000,000 acres of cultivated land in the country. This amount can be increased, but Mexico is not endowed with great stretches of agricultural land still unexploited, and the limitations which this fact puts on the land-distribution program are already forcing themselves on the attention of the government.

Officials of the Department of Agriculture express the belief that if the program is to be carried out in the way now proposed, from four to eight times as much land must be taken as has thus far been appropriated. This is the case because of the large number of peasants still not included in the legislation in force, and because larger areas must be given if the land is of inferior quality. Nor is this the whole picture, for almost all the grants made previous to 1933, it is declared, were too small to make the villages truly "self-sufficient," and the growth of population in the villages tends to make once sufficient lands no longer so. It is to be noted that Mexico seems now to be having, perhaps for the first time, a fairly rapid increase in population. It was reported in 1910 as 15,160,369, and in 1930 as 16,524,639.

Still, it may be argued that the problem cannot be seri-

ous, for there are even now great *latifundios* which can be broken up and distributed to the landless. There are even now rural holdings of more than 24,700 acres each, totalling 70,992,055 hectares, or about 35% of the area of Mexico—this according to Jesús Silva Herzog, Subsecretary of Education, writing in *El Nacional* for May 16, 1934. Here it is said that the land needed can be found in less extensive holdings. All that is necessary is to enforce the existing laws, and in some degree to broaden the basis of distribution as to the amounts to be assigned. This is apparently the position taken in the Six-Year Plan, which declares that in all the States there shall be taken, within a year, the measures necessary “to bring about the real and effective distribution of the large holdings among small farmers.”

But the figures are deceptive, because the great holdings have always contained a large percentage of land not suited to agriculture, especially small farming. That is now more true than formerly, because of the expropriations which have already been made. The problem is a double one, physical and social. Lands can be found sufficient in area, but not of the sorts on which Mexican small farming has heretofore had its success. Adjustment of the farming groups to the new conditions under which they will have to live is a much more difficult task than that heretofore faced by the distribution program.

In short, the Mexican land-dream, as it is outlined in the Six-Year Plan, is much more far-reaching than it was at the time of the adoption of the Constitution of 1917.

It contemplates a thorough-going change in the landholding system, and probably a transplantation of population to distant areas and agricultural conditions not formerly contemplated. To some degree the problem may be lessened by the efforts which the Government is loyally making to improve the use of the land by better cultivation and diversification of crops. But limited agricultural resources, increasing population, and the admitted unwillingness of the population to seek new locations, combine to make the land-problem one which cannot be solved by a mere redistribution of holdings.

To many outside observers, the return to semi-communal ownership of land which the program contemplates seems, in itself, a policy of doubtful advantages. Formerly Mexican leaders were divided in opinion as to whether the system should be set up as a temporary arrangement, to be kept only until the populations receiving grants had developed a better realization of the meaning of property rights, or as a permanent system. Doubts continued to be expressed as to the possibility of making communal exploitation efficient. The leaders now declare that village land ownership is to be permanent. Land will be best cultivated, they maintain, through communal holding plus state guidance.

Whether that will prove to be true, and if so when, must, of course, be matters of opinion only. The figures of production of the chief crops in Mexico do not indicate that greater production has already been obtained. In fact, the statistics seem to show that, on the whole, the

yield has declined. Perhaps the statistics are not to be relied upon. On the other hand, there appears to be general agreement that the countryman is better off than formerly. In any case, a temporary decline does not necessarily show that the hopes of those sponsoring the program are groundless. A dip in yield at first may be caused by the lag which comes in the process of adjustment to new conditions. The ultimate success or failure may depend upon the efficiency of the program of education, and on the ability of the Indian population to develop higher degrees of industrial effort under the guidance which is to be given.

The condition of the laboring classes has received attention from the Revolution second only to that of the landless, though the Six-Year Plan gives much less prominence to this subject. A study as of 1929 reports per capita income in Mexico to be \$36 per year, compared to \$88 in Cuba, \$159 in Uruguay, \$216 in Argentina, and \$657 in the United States. Whatever qualifications must be made as to the meaning of such figures, it is clear that the standard of life of the average Mexican laborer, in agriculture or in industry, is lamentably low, and its improvement properly a matter for the attention of the government.

Under the Constitution of 1917, far-reaching measures have been adopted to try to improve the condition of labor. They run the gamut of the forward-looking legislation adopted in other countries, and include a large number of new experiments. In 1934, steps were first actively taken to raise the pitifully low wage still paid to the average manual laborer. Whether some of the labor laws have

not outrun practical standards and given rise to serious abuses, may be a matter of dispute, but their intent cannot but be approved. The ambitions of the government have been gathered together in a comprehensive Labor Code, now being revised.

Of concrete proposals for further advance on these lines, the Six-Year Plan has but few. It contents itself with declarations of principles, including "the right to work," which will permit "satisfaction of necessities and honest pleasures," the duty of the State to guarantee the right, the right of laborers to bargain collectively, and the obligation of the State to promote and to sustain syndical organizations within the labor groups, and in general to defend the laborers from oppression by employers. Passage of laws for unemployment insurance and encouragement of home-owning are to be adopted in the first year.

The land and labor legislation are parts of a nationalistic program, and the foundation of Revolutionary policy. With them, the Six-Year Plan is to integrate a large number of other movements, some already under way, some heretofore neglected. Taken together, these are to make Mexico a well-knit unit, more self-sufficient socially, economically, and politically.

To this end, reforms of fundamental character, internal and in relations to other countries, are declared to be essential. Many conditions in the life of the Republic call for radical reforms, and for funds far greater than it has heretofore been possible to secure. "Lamentable hygienic conditions" demand clinics and large expenditures of a

preventive nature to improve public health. This is particularly true in the back-country, which has been sadly neglected while efforts have been concentrated on the problems of the larger cities, especially the capital.

Continued support is pledged to education, in which the Revolution has already accomplished much. The activity in building up the school system has been, from many points of view, its greatest accomplishment. Instruction has been fitted to the needs of local populations. It is primarily turned toward lines such as agriculture—diversification of crops, intensification of cultivation, and better methods of raising live stock—and development of household industries producing goods which can be locally consumed. White-collar training is conspicuous by its absence.

Along with these endeavors to improve conditions within Mexico itself, there have appeared a number of movements looking toward creation of a Mexico for the Mexicans, which shall be free from foreign influences within the country, and far less dependent than formerly upon foreign markets for sales of national products and for imported goods.

Industry is to be Mexicanized. Laws are to be passed which will regulate the exploitation of wasting assets, such as the products of the mining industry. To that end, the national ownership of the subsoil is to be made effective, and production therefrom is to be rationed. Certain areas are to be set aside as reserves, others are to be exploited only under conditions which will give the greatest return to the State.

Taking over of mineral deposits by foreigners is to be stopped, but exploitation by national cooperative groups of miners is to be encouraged. The petroleum industry is to be similarly controlled, and the area of "concessions" granted is to be reduced. Exploration for new development-zones is to be by public authority.

Sources of power are to be developed, particularly electric and hydro-electric, which will allow the carrying-on of agriculture and industry through power sold at low rates. A national distribution-net is to be built, which will create new industrial centers.

To assure the greatest results from these efforts, national production and consumption are to be adjusted. Imports are to be discouraged by creation of "national" industries. Individual initiative and competition are to be restrained, so as to assure coordination of effort among producers, middlemen, and consumers, as well as fair supply, fair prices, and adequate wages.

The new economic system does not overlook the possibilities of foreign trade, but would limit exports to items "which our soil and our industry can produce indefinitely," thus apparently excluding petroleum products and those of the mining industry. Even so, exports are to be regulated by the producers in accord with the foreign demand, so that individual firms will not compete against each other for the trade.

To promote the national program, an extensive communications net is to be created, including roads, railroads, airlines, and steamships. Four rail lines are to be completed

within the next six years, aviation is to be subsidized, as is the national merchant marine.

All the ends sought in this ambitious sketch of ideals are defensible. Some of them lack definiteness. Not a few are obviously things for which peoples have long striven, and will long continue to strive. Few, if any, will be fully accomplished in any country in six years. But plans are not to be judged harshly because they attempt too much.

The comments which follow are not critical of the Six-Year Plan because it is too ambitious, nor do they condemn the program because some of its provisions will, if carried out, harm the foreign interests which have become established in Mexico. If the advance is not won in six years, there will be more time available, and incidental harm to foreigners is of small moment if great benefit can be won for the common people of Mexico itself.

The nationalism toward which the Plan as a whole aims, and the declarations which those who support it make, indicate a general orientation of national policy which, while it rests on ground already won, is new. If following such a path will raise the standard of life in Mexico and contribute to the advance and contentment of her people, then it needs no further defense. That it will do so is by no means clear.

Though nationalistic movements have become common in the world, it is still true that no nation lives unto itself alone. However much states may, in political matters, pride themselves on their "independence," they have become economically interdependent. The degree to which they

draw on the world for resources which they do not find within their borders reflects their enjoyment of the resources of the world.

These are truths which apply to all countries, but with special force to the smaller countries of limited physical endowment, and to the developing countries whose resources have only partially found their way into world markets. They apply to Mexico. Such nations, in the measure that they cut themselves off from the world, limit the contributions which they can make to a world-economy and the advantages which they can enjoy from membership in the family of nations. They are best advised when they push production in the lines in which they excel, receiving in return, in as great quantity as possible, what they cannot produce, or produce less advantageously.

It is easy to understand the concern of Mexico for the conservation of those of her natural resources which are wasting assets, such as petroleum and the wealth of her mines. In the long run, such deposits are exhausted whether kept for domestic use or exchanged for imported goods. But if such goods are not exported, Mexico must turn in upon itself and accept an even lower standard of life than her citizens now have. Over half of the value of Mexican exports is mineral products, which form a comparable part of her imports. Without these imports, indeed, a large portion of the industries upon which part of her people depends cannot be maintained.

It is natural, also, that Mexico should desire to have a domestically owned industry. Mining is not overwhelm-

ingly in the hands of foreigners. United States interests, for example, were reported in 1927 to control over half of the investment in all branches of mining except gold. Textiles are made by foreign firms in all but small part, and foreigners are active in public utilities.

Through conditions similar to these, many countries have passed at one stage of their development. The United States is an outstanding example of this. Later, as local initiative and capital develop, the foreigner plays a less and less important rôle. The cooperation of foreign capital in the earlier stages of growth in developing resources has elsewhere allowed more rapid advance, and has incidentally created, more rapidly than would otherwise be the case, resources which, through taxes, make possible public activities which would otherwise be postponed.

But any country is free to frown upon cooperation with foreign initiative and capital if it wishes. Most countries have chosen to encourage it. Mexico itself formerly did so. Would Mexico have been farther advanced if, instead of welcoming foreign capital, invested in railroads, textile factories, street-car lines, water powers, and mines, it had reserved all these for unaided domestic enterprise, commanding the small local capital which would have been available? Mexico may now reverse the policy if it wishes, but it seems at least probable that such a decision would retard national development and have an unfavorable influence on the national standard of life. It is for Mexico to choose.

All "Plans" have one feature in common, they can be

changed. Some projects in the Six-Year Plan will, it seems, be pushed to realization. Some will be modified as experience shows advisable, and some will be promptly or tardily abandoned. It is for Mexico to decide whether an attempt to carry through those parts of the program which seem to contradict the experience of other nations shall be made. Ultra-nationalistic programs have failed elsewhere, but Mexico is free to try out her own. If, in doing so, she succeeds in raising the common citizen from the low standard of life, backward social activity and political indifference in which he now lives, nobody will regret that the result was achieved by means which other nations have not found to bring success.

## THE SIX-YEAR PLAN IN EDUCATION

*by Rafael Ramírez*

IN education, as in the other departments of public affairs, we have been working in Mexico in short stages, under plans of only one year's duration. We have seemed to be a nearsighted people, incapable of envisioning great perspectives. As though we were ants, year after year we thought only of the one following, and stored up provisions for realizing in our social life projects which terminated the next winter. This method seemed to us to display some foresight, only because in other worlds, that of the cicadas, for example, the inhabitants live entirely without plan.

But one day a man who—though he occupies no official position—has dedicated his life exclusively to orienting the movements of Mexican life into the best channels, realizing that we belong to the world of men, that because we walk erect we should take in greater perspectives, said to us, ". . . this is the time to lay down a program of action which will cover the next six-year presidential term. This program ought to be founded on calculation, on statistics, on the lessons of experience. We must estimate how much we can accomplish, given the possibilities of our budgets and of our special circumstances. . . ."

After long reflection and detailed study, such a plan was worked out, and approved by President Rodríguez. The President made the following recommendations to the country: "The Six-Year Plan must enter into the thinking of the nation; it must be taken into account and given driving force by every factor of our economic activity. The governments of the states and the cities could co-operate usefully by setting up graduated six-year plans for those works of common utility of which the masses of land-workers are capable. The state governments might make the greatest possible cooperation in helping and stimulating the carrying-out of these plans the pride of their administrations. In that way, this constructive movement could be made universal, so that all Mexicans could feel their share of responsibility for its success."

When President Cárdenas was campaigning for office, he expressed himself as follows: ". . . and nothing could be better than the common purpose of the whole republic as a starting-point for the governmental program which must be put into effect during the constitutional term of 1934-1940. During that period, the agrarian problem as a whole is to be solved; the organization of a workers' united front is to be facilitated, so that the raising of the standard of living can be made effective; the educational program our masses need is to be carried out. In short, there will be put into action the whole scheme which General Calles has been expounding. This doctrine proposes to make of Mexico a firm-based and strong country

in this epoch in which the people of the world are engaged in an economic-social struggle for those better conditions which might assure effective prosperity to all workmen and their homes."

Now we have a Plan. It is a method by which every aspect of our national life can be reconstructed; it is the specifications for six years of work. I shall concentrate upon telling you what we are going to do, during six years, in the field of education.

The Plan states that, during the next six years, primary education is to be increased. Schools are to be spread through all parts of the country, in order to ascertain whether it is possible to carry out in full the constitutional precept which makes primary education obligatory for every Mexican. With this end in view, many rural schools will be established. In addition, a sufficient number of training-schools will be set down in the urban centers to disseminate among the student population the fundamental education which the country desires the new generation to have. While the urban primary schools will be created by the united efforts of the city, state, and federal governments, the rural schools will be established by the federal government alone. Mexico is essentially a rural country, and its system of education should be adapted to that fact. For that reason, the Six-Year Plan in education puts special emphasis on the effort which must be expended on the rural schools. Concretely, rural schools will be established on the following scale:

In 1934	1,000
1935	2,000
1936	2,000
1937	2,000
1938	2,000
1939	3,000
	—
	12,000

At the end of 1934, there will be in operation 8,531 rural schools. By the end of 1939, there will be 11,000 more. That is to say that, by the beginning of 1940, we shall have no less than 19,531 rural schools, all supported by the federal government. Besides these, we will have those sustained by the state and municipal governments.

In Mexico, public primary education falls within the provinces of the federal, state, and municipal governments. This situation results in three distinct official systems of schools, each with a different orientation and tendency. In order to give the whole effort a unified direction, it is necessary to integrate all the schools into a single system. Until this is accomplished, we cannot say that we have a national system of education. For this reason, the Six-Year Plan states, "The educational activities of the municipal, state, and federal governments must be coordinated in order to obviate the serious difficulties caused by the disparity of intention, method, and procedure formerly applied to this work. Therefore, in the shortest time possible, suitable agreements shall be entered into between the local

and federal authorities, on a basis on which the unification of primary education activities will not exempt the local authorities from their educational duties. Said agreements shall stipulate that the technical management and administration of primary schools lie within the province of the federal government."

In the summer of 1934, the primary educational system had been unified in Chihuahua and Zacatecas. Agreements to that end were soon to be signed with Coahuila, Morelos, Tlaxcala, Nayarit, Colima, and Guerrero. During the next years, the unification of primary education will be accomplished through the country. There is already a deep desire on the part of the country "to unify the work of rural and urban primary education throughout the republic, as, otherwise, there is a considerable shrinkage of the fruits of the effort expended to achieve, by means of culture, the unification of our national consciousness and spirit."

The Mexican laws make it obligatory for mining, industrial, and agricultural enterprises to establish and sustain, on their own account, primary schools for the education of their workers' children. The application of these laws has heretofore been in the hands of the state governments. At the end of 1934, this became a federal prerogative, specifically one of the Department of Public Education. Mexico is a land of *latifundios*, of which each is an agricultural business enterprise on which there should be a school. The schools on these *latifundios*, with those of the factories and mining-centers, will form a system of no less than 3,000 schools. The enterprises which employ a large

number of workers have the further obligation of taking care of the more advanced technical education of two or three children of employees, those who have distinguished themselves in their primary studies. This is what we are to understand when we read, in the Six-Year Plan, "The duties in the matter of education which are placed upon the owners by the labor laws shall be the object of the most scrupulous attention, until the workers receive all the benefits of education and instruction to which they have a right. Consequently, the establishment of the schools which, consonant with Article 123 of the Constitution, the agricultural, industrial, and mining enterprises should sustain, shall be watched as will the carrying-out of the provision that the children of wage-earners are, at the expense of the owners, to be sent to technical schools to become trained workers."

The school in general, but the primary school in particular, is a social institution, over which the State should exercise absolute control, for otherwise the risk is run that it will fall into the hands of interests opposed to those of the people for whom it has been created. It is certainly because of this consideration that the Plan ordains, ". . . that the instruction imparted in the schools, and the requirements teachers should fulfil in order to carry out the social function entrusted to them, must be fixed by the State as the real, direct representative of the people. Private individuals should not be allowed the right to organize or direct training-schools outside the control of the State—as would have to be the case under a false and excessive

concept of individual liberty. The right to teach should be understood as a privilege to impart education—conceded to everybody as long as the requisites incorporated in the laws are fulfilled. The State's control over primary and secondary education privately imparted will be exercised: first, over the scientific and pedagogic character of the schoolwork; second, over the social orientation; third, over the socialistic and non-religious character which the school should have; fourth, over the adequate professional preparation to be demanded of directors and teachers in private schools; and, fifth, over the hygienic conditions to be fulfilled by private schools. The primary school, in addition to excluding all religious training, shall supply true, scientific, and rational answers to all the questions which must be answered in the souls of the pupils in order to give them an exact and positive concept of the world surrounding them, and of the society in which they live. Otherwise the school will not fulfill its social mission. It follows that the State will have to amend Article 3 of the Constitution, so that it will define in precise terminology the principle that primary and secondary education are to be imparted directly by the State, or under its immediate control and direction, and that, in every way, education of these two classifications is to be based on the orientations and postulates of socialist doctrine upheld by the Mexican Revolution."

In accord with the above ideas, the control of the private schools will be taken over little by little, so that at the end of the constitutional six-year period there will be in the

country only one system of primary and secondary education, directed and controlled by the State.

As the schools of the various systems thus unified are going to be numerous, and will need a strong and superior technical direction, especially for the rural schools, Mexico being predominantly a rural country, there will be created during the next six years "to take care of the technical necessities of this branch, a Council of Rural Education, under the Department of Public Education. This Council will be a mixed body, formed of teachers and educational authorities not occupied in administrative functions. Its object will be to direct the educational and social orientation of the rural schools."

By virtue of this development, in the next few years we shall have greater consistency in our school system, as well as a real educational doctrine, which—lacking technical co-workers—we have not, up to now, been able to formulate with certainty, our good intentions notwithstanding.

In order to have enough teachers for the considerable number of schools to be opened during the next six years, it was necessary to devote attention to the procedure to be followed in training them. On this point, the Six-Year Plan says, "The results of teaching, its greater success, as well as that of educational work in general, depend so much on the methods employed that the level of the rural schools keeps a direct ratio to the professional preparation of the teachers. The State therefore feels that special attention should be given to the establishment of normal schools, in which will be imparted the knowledge requisite to fill-

ing the rôle of a rural teacher—not only primary instruction, but also elementary and practical agricultural training. Only with a solidly and technically organized training will it be possible to produce rural teachers able to carry out the social mission of directing the rural people, whose lives they will have to share, to the solution of the majority of their practical problems. As a result of this critical approach, the rural normal schools and the schools of practical agriculture will be fused, creating regional institutions whose principal objective will be the determination of the basic principles and procedures of rational exploitation of the land, as well as to give teachers who will lend their services to the agricultural centers the most useful professional preparation. The number of regional institutes for agricultural workers will be increased at a rate of no less than three a year. These will be established in strategic locations, so that the varied climates of the republic, and its most important agricultural products, can be studied and taken advantage of."

These are the words of the Plan. For the purpose of greater clarity on this subject, I shall give you a few facts. Above the rural primary instruction, we have been counting the schools of practical agriculture, which in Mexico we call Agricultural School-Centers because they have been established in strategic sites suitable to the concentration in them of all the children in specified agricultural regions who have finished their primary schooling. Functioning separately from these agricultural schools, we have also had rural normal schools, in which we have been train-

ing teachers necessary to disseminate primary education in the rural sectors. Now we are planning to integrate these two types into one institution, forming what we call Regional Agricultural-Workers Schools, in which we shall produce at one time both competent practical workers and better rural teachers. The organization of these schools is rounded out by an Institute of Rural Investigation and one of Social Action. In 1933 the situation was as follows:

Agricultural School-Centers	7
Rural Normal Schools	15
Regional Schools	2

In 1934 the situation was:

Agricultural School-Centers	5
Rural Normal Schools	11
Regional Schools	6

During the next few years, this integration of agricultural school-centers and rural normal schools will proceed, and there will further be created at least three additional regional agricultural-workers schools each year.

During the next six-year period, attention will be paid not only to the development of the rural education and agricultural instruction which we might call intermediate, but also to that of a more advanced type. With respect to this, the Plan textually states, "Agricultural education will be the object of the State's special attention in its practical aspects, as well as in its more advanced and theoretical forms. Its aim shall be the training of technical experts

fitted to solve the problems of Mexican agriculture, who will at the same time be animated by a true social spirit. Agricultural education should be planned and directed, as should the other educational activities, with uniform intentions, and should thus coordinate the interests and needs of the Department of Agriculture with the points-of-view of the Department of Public Education. There will therefore be created a Technical Council on Agricultural Education. This council will set the directions and pass on the plans of study and programs of training of the federal government's agricultural schools. The membership of the council will be made up of equal numbers of representatives from the two Departments mentioned."

Mexico has great industrial possibilities. For this reason, a six-year educational plan could not fail to deal with technical education. In the chapter dealing with this phase, the Plan says, "Very special attention will be paid to that technical training which tends to enable men to utilize and transform natural resources to the end of ameliorating the conditions of human life. In addition, then, to the effort to make the primary rural and urban school active, utilitarian, and vital, the development of technical training in its various forms will be taken care of, so that the many types of workers can be enabled to cooperate efficaciously in the processes of dominating and using nature. The primary object of this technical training will be to prepare workers of diverse kinds, to condition them so that they can be incorporated advantageously into the industries of the country, whether as manual laborers or as technical

directors. In order that this objective may be attained, means must be found which will allow the benefits of technical education to devolve preferably on those who, because of their class-conditions, will be likely to enter industries as workers. This can be accomplished only by supporting the workers or their families during the period of their technical training, as otherwise the necessity of earning a living will hinder them from becoming efficient in one of the branches of industry. With this in mind, the federal government will extend its system of fellowships, interpreting the support of workers by this means as an item in the cost of technical education. Further, since the interests of the workers and of the national economy demand that each human element entering into industrial production should work under conditions allowing it to make full use of its capacities, an Institute of Professional Orientation will be created. This institute will explore and define talents and vocations of those who receive technical instruction. It will place the students advantageously in relation to their personal tendencies and psychological capacities, and will make studies of the particular conditions required in each industry."

The Six-Year Plan does not formulate projects concerning university education. In Mexico, this higher cultural training is in the hands of the Autonomous University. I do not, therefore, speak of this matter. Nevertheless, I cannot resist the temptation to pass on some pronouncements related to scientific investigation. "Knowing that scientific investigation is an activity fundamentally neces-

sary to the progress of the country, and that the federal government should not disregard the general advancement of the sciences, it will create and support institutes, investigation centers, laboratories, etc., of a type to constantly raise the level of science in Mexico, assure its wider diffusion, and carry out those works which our country can contribute to the development of culture."

During the next six years, finally, the federal government will encourage physical education throughout the whole country "to the end of bettering the conditions of the people, and of indirectly combatting vices, particularly alcoholism. Sports will therefore be made accessible to the workers, and the greatest interest awakened in both participants and spectators."

I have explained in detail what we are doing, and what we plan to do in the next six years, in the field of public education. Now I shall attempt to give a synthetic picture of the matter, using figures—surely a pleasant method to you who hold figures in such esteem. Of the gross amount of the federal budget, we shall divert to education, in 1934, fifteen per cent. This will be increased by one per cent each year, until—in 1939—twenty per cent of the federal expenditures will be educational.

I would not wish to conclude without speaking of the ideological progress in education which we intend to achieve in the coming six years. We want to make our school a proletarian school, reflecting the interests, aspirations, and ideals of the workers and the tillers of the field. We want to prepare for the coming of a new society, more

just and more equitable. We shall educate the new generation in such a manner that we shall have men without religious prejudices, convinced of the necessity of social regulations, under which the wealth created by all will be equitably distributed; under which the instruments and means of production will be socialized; under which women will be emancipated and associated with men in working for collective progress; and under which individual perfection will be considered, not as an end, but as a means toward social perfection. That is where we are bound for. And if perhaps we, the teachers of today, do not arrive there, those who follow us will reach the goal.

## BANKING IN MEXICO

*by Antonio Espinosa de los Monteros*

AS compared with the credit institutions of the United States, Mexican banks are very young. Mexico can boast of having the oldest University in North America, but certainly its banks are of the youngest on the continent. There were no commercial banks in the country before 1864. During three centuries, the only organized credit facilities available were those furnished to the feudal land-owners by the Catholic Church which, as everybody knows, has always taken care, not only of the spiritual welfare of its members, but of its own temporal power as well. Through its banking functions—even though it was very considerate as regards interest-rates and foreclosures, in accordance with Canon Law—the Church little by little became the largest landowner in the country, and by 1830 its holdings had become so large that people began to consider such concentration a public nuisance and a menace to the newly-established democracy. But it was not until after a twenty-year fight between the Liberal and Conservative Parties that it was possible to dispossess the Church of its lands which, as we have seen, represented the earnings of honest mortgage banking during three centuries.

In passing, it might be well to mention here that, by

the end of the Colonial Period, a public-spirited man, Romero de Terreros, was permitted by the Spanish Crown to establish a National Pawnshop to relieve the poor, but not the landowners, from the clutches of the usurers who infested the whole country. I leave it entirely to your imagination to draw a complete picture of the credit conditions prevailing in Mexico at about the time when Jefferson, Hamilton, and other great Americans were thinking of a modern banking system for the United States.

Outside of the Church mortgage operations, and the pawnshop credit, there were no traces of banking in Mexico before 1864. In that year, under the reign of Maximilian, a branch of the Anglo-South American Bank was opened. This example was soon followed, and a few local banks sprang up in several states, especially towards the end of the 1870's. In 1882, the Federal Government authorized a group of Frenchmen to establish a bank of issue under a most liberal charter. By 1896, there were some twelve banks in Mexico, representing an investment of about 33,000,000 *pesos*, with a note issue of some 29,000,-000 *pesos*, total deposits of 35,000,000, and 28,000,000 in cash reserves.

Thus the short period from 1864 to 1896 witnessed the birth and infancy of banking in Mexico. But even though the birth had been most successful, if we judge it by the handsome 20% to 40% earnings the banks made from the start, the infancy was not totally devoid of mischief. Hardly had the banks adapted themselves to the new environment when the trouble started. They declared war

on each other, and there developed, under the lenient laws of a paternal state, a cut-throat competition which greatly endangered, not only the interest of their clients, but their own existence.

The Federal Government, conscious of its duty, then thought it proper to put an end to such a chaotic youth. In 1897, it passed the first general banking law of the land. Under its provisions, all banks could issue notes on condition that they had a minimum capital of 500,000 *pesos*, that they kept a 33% cash reserve against outstanding notes and an additional reserve in Government bonds, metals, foreign exchange, or sight documents amounting to 40% of the issue. Furthermore, it forbade all issue banks to lend except on 180-day commercial paper, and provided that such banks had to operate under the strictest supervision and the direct control of the Government.

The law meant a great advance over the previous chaos. Nonetheless, even though it greatly encouraged banking at a time when it was urgently needed for the opening-up of the country, it was fundamentally unsound. In those days, even more than today, Mexico needed long-term, rather than short-term, loans. It did not take the banks long to realize that they must either violate the legal provisions or keep their issues and deposits lying idle in their vaults. Since bank-directors were, and still are, only too human, they decided to break the law, and to lend on mortgages, thus freezing their assets to a very large extent. Besides, the very existence of several issue banks did not help to stop the previous competition, and by the 1907

crisis most of them had already exhausted their possibilities of issue. Like the national banks of the United States, they came very near disaster under the tremendous strain. Finally, there was serious trouble regarding the cash reserves, as in case of need—as in 1907—they could not be used to strengthen the weakest links of the chain.

However, the system did work, and much progress was made from 1897 to 1910. Just before the most acute period of the Revolution, there were thirty-three banks in the country. They had invested 180,000,000 *pesos* in the business, had deposits amounting to 180,000,000, had issued notes for 120,000,000, and had cash reserves of about 85,000,000. Thus it might be said that the Mexican banking system had, under the law of 1897, reached a sufficiently prosperous middle age.

And then came the Revolution. Conditions grew worse every day. Collections became impossible. Foreclosures on mortgage loans were absolutely useless. And, on top of all this, the Huerta Government forced the banks to subscribe a loan for military purposes, which they did only through a suspension of cash payments, authorized by the borrower, and through extension of their note issues.

When the struggle was over, by the end of 1916, almost all the banks had practically gone under. The Carranza regime not only declared all of Huerta's decrees on banking void, but thought the time ripe for revenge against the banks. First it ordered that banks which could not comply with the provisions of the 1897 law should be liquidated at once. Naturally, the survivors were few. Then it seized

all the metallic reserves, giving new bonds in exchange. This was the final blow, and marked the end of the banking system on the old basis.

Then, for a few years, Mexico actually became a bankless country. Only a few private bankers and branches of foreign banks operated. Interest rates on the best commercial paper soared to incredible heights—18%, 20%, and 25% were common. Business was carried on a cash basis.

But Mexico is much like the Phoenix of fable; it rises anew out of its own ashes. By 1921, peace had returned, and with it the need to reorganize the banking system. First of all, it was found necessary to be lenient toward the old banks, and to let them settle their previous affairs as well as they could, so that they could immediately renew operations. Further, the Government authorized the Monetary Commission to undertake ordinary banking business in order to put an end to the tremendous credit hunger. Then it began to lay the basis of the new structure.

However, Mexico's present banking system really dates from the birth of the Bank of Mexico in 1925. The Constitution of 1917 had provided for the creating, under Government control, of a bank with the monopoly of issue. There were several attempts to establish it, but it was not accomplished until 1925. In accordance with the constitutional mandate, the Government kept 51% of the 100,000,000 *peso* capital stock. The bank was given the exclusive right to issue bills redeemable in gold, backed by a 50% gold reserve. It was also authorized to act as a

rediscount central bank, and to operate as a regular commercial discount and deposit institution. The regulation of the currency and of the exchanges was likewise placed in its hands. All the other banks could, if they so desired, associate with the Bank of Mexico. For the first time in its history, Mexico had been provided with a central banking system.

Unfortunately for Mexico, the new institution was not able, until 1931, to achieve its purposes. It did create easier credit facilities and make progress through its competition with private banks. But the competition itself caused a great deal of hard feeling among the other banks. Consequently, they did little business with the Bank of Mexico. Nor could the latter very well force them to. Its only advantage over them was in its right to issue gold notes, and as gold was at a premium over silver coin, neither gold nor its representatives could be made to circulate except for the sake of convenience. The result was that the Bank was utterly unable to become the supreme banking authority of Mexico, as the law had intended, though it did help credit conditions and make a good reputation.

Here it is worthwhile to mention another step taken by the Government. I am thinking of the establishment of the National Bank for Agricultural Credit, in 1926. Credit facilities for the big landowners had always existed since Colonial times, but the little fellows in the country had always been victims of the local merchant and the usurer. This was particularly true of the new small farmers who came into existence as a result of the agrarian legislation,

under which the land given to communities cannot be mortgaged. The Government, therefore, perceived that the benefit of the new order of things would not be felt by the agricultural masses unless they could borrow freely on easy terms from banks capable of meeting their special needs on a cooperative basis.

This has been the purpose of the agricultural banks created since 1926. Despite their many mistakes, they have done much good in regions where modern credit facilities were completely unknown. Regardless of their relatively small resources, they have introduced many new methods for financing crops and improvements. At present, their real difficulty lies in getting the amount agriculture demands. The handsome contributions made by the Government towards that end do not seem enough to fill the tremendous needs.

Let us see how the Mexican banks fared during the recent crisis. Mexico did not suffer as much as the United States from bank failures. This does not mean that the depression did not work as much havoc here as elsewhere. Mexico's chief business has been to export all sorts of raw materials. The minute the foreign prices of her products fell to the lowest levels on record, the exchanges turned more and more against the *peso*, exporters reduced their operation even more than they had in previous years because of the long post-war depression in the demand for our products, unemployment and wage-cuts ensued, and the country found itself in as bad a position as the rest of the world.

Under these conditions, the stability of the credit structure was menaced. During the preceding years, banks had been accustomed to make loans only on a gold basis, in order not to assume the risk of exchange fluctuations. In 1931, most of the debts in Mexico were gold debts. But as our balance of payments turned against us, gold fled from the country, and only small amounts of it could be found here, at a tremendous premium. Debtors, therefore, found it more and more difficult to settle their debts on maturity. By the middle of 1931, bankers found most of their assets hopelessly frozen.

By July, 1931, it was quite obvious that something radical had to be done to avoid a general breakdown. The Government had been studying the way out. On July 25th, a law was passed ruling out gold as money, and gold debts became enforceable only in silver money at par. At first, the whole thing seemed preposterous, but soon everybody realized that losses for the creditor classes were tolerable, and that the measure really meant salvation for the banks and their depositors. Despite it, however, a panic developed during the first few days of August, but fortunately only one bank failed. There have been no failures since.

With a masterly stroke, the Government not only came to the rescue of the credit structure of the country, but did something else. Radical changes were introduced into the charter of the Bank of Mexico. It was empowered to issue silver notes, but only for rediscount purposes, in order to avoid abuses. Further, in order that the banks

might join the Bank of Mexico, and thus integrate a harmonious and well-knit system, the central bank was prohibited from doing ordinary commercial business in competition with discount houses. Finally, the Government placed in the hands of the Bank of Mexico all the powers necessary to control the national money market, as well as the exchanges. In this manner, besides avoiding all the dangers, the country came out of the trial with a better and stronger credit organization.

Credit conditions have improved steadily since 1931. The Bank of Mexico has played a most important rôle. It has been able to issue notes for about 100,000,000 *pesos*. Almost every banking institution has joined the system, and rediscounts are going up. With its easy-money policy, the Bank has succeeded in raising prices, though only moderately. It has likewise established a firm control on the dollar exchange and the price of gold. The Bank of Mexico has truly become the stronghold of Mexican finance.

Yet I do not want to give a one-sided view of the matter. That Mexico now has an up-to-date banking system is beyond a doubt. But I feel that I should tell a few things concerning present-day difficulties and dangers looming ahead. There developed, during the spring and easily summer of 1934, a rather queer situation. On the one hand, deposits had grown so much that banks, not knowing how to use them, began to refuse new accounts. On the other hand, Mexico needs, today as much as ever, large amounts of capital for agricultural and industrial expan-

sion. The only logical explanation to this awkward situation seems to be that the short-term money market has reached its saturation point: that is, under existing conditions, the demand for commercial credit has ceased to increase. And, since commercial banks of the ordinary type are not allowed to make long-term loans, money finds no occupation, and weighs heavily on the shoulders of the bankers. It is difficult to predict how the banking system will get around this problem. However, it seems clear that either the Bank of Mexico must absorb the surplus funds, or some way must be found to invest them permanently in production or public works. Otherwise, I fear that the idle money may cause trouble in the foreign exchanges or the local stock market. Whatever steps are taken, one cannot doubt that Mexico is in bad need of credit facilities for producers, and that stress should hereafter be laid on the organization of a sound market for long-term investments.

The situation just described probably explains why the branches of foreign banks are leaving Mexico. They were able to operate and make money while there was need for commercial credit. But the competition of new banks has been so strong, and credit so abundant in recent years, that they find it difficult even to make expenses. As a matter of fact, these branches were once very useful, but the reorganization of the national banking system has rendered them superfluous. Perhaps they will soon be substituted by branches or agencies of foreign financiers who first perceive opportunities for permanent investment in Mexico.

Another question of great moment at present is that of the foreign exchanges. For over a year the Bank of Mexico has succeeded in pegging the Mexican *peso* with the dollar at 3.60. Previous to that, the *peso* had depreciated as against the gold dollar some 30% or 40%. It has lost some additional 40% of its gold value through the fall of the dollar. The result is that production of exportable commodities has been greatly stimulated, while production for local consumption is at a standstill. Domestic prices and wages have not as yet undergone much change. But there are certain indications that the internal price- and wage-levels are about to go up. Will that affect business conditions? Will it reflect itself on the exchanges? Is the banking system ready to cope with all the consequences? What policy would be right for the future?

These are the questions Mexico has to answer in the near future. Fortunately, we are now in a better position than we were in before the crisis. If it was possible for us to come out of that ordeal in better condition than other nations, we feel confident that the future is even brighter for us than the recent past.

## REVOLUTIONS: MEXICAN AND RUSSIAN

*by Stanley Rypins*

IN 1917, in both Mexico and Russia, acceleration of the rate of social change had reached the stage called revolution. Eighteen years thereafter, in 1935, each of these nations triumphantly proclaims its revolutionary character, and both are indiscriminately viewed with suspicion, hostility, and fury by the peoples whose current social trends are more leisurely. Developments in these two countries, however, have been of so disparate a nature that condemnation or fear of the one need not preclude admiration of or confidence in the other. The revolutions of Mexico and of Russia, though possessed of more than one feature in common, are certainly not in the same category. They travel divergent roads toward separate goals. They vary in tempo. They employ different methods. They achieve diverse ends.

A difference in the character of these two revolutions is apparent at once in the first impressions made by Mexico and the Soviet Union upon observant visitors. Arriving in Moscow or Leningrad, the traveler is immediately made aware of the radical quality of his environment. If he sees nothing novel with his own eyes, or otherwise fails to sense the revolutionary atmosphere for himself, he will soon be taken in hand by enthusiastic communists to be eagerly

schooled by them in the manifold achievements of the revolution and instructed in its well-formulated program of future accomplishment. Ordinarily, it may be said, the Russian Revolution "hits one in the eye." Apparent to any sensitive observer is the astonishing buoyancy of spirit which, despite poverty and its attendant hardships, everywhere manifests itself. The visitor to the U. S. S. R. is involuntarily steeped in a bath of optimism, the tonic effect of which is palpable and slow to disappear. In Mexico, on the contrary, the Revolution is elusive and has to be diligently sought out. Nothing of a revolutionary nature is in the air. No proselytizing influence operates upon the visitor. In the nation's capital one explores numerous streets with revolutionary names but discovers no outward and visible sign of social upheaval more threatening than the *Partido Nacional Revolucionario* in the beautiful *Paseo de la Reforma*. The social psychology of the Federal District is similar to, though more placid than, that of the District of Columbia. One could dwell many weeks in Mexico City unaware of the Revolution. A communist visitor, indeed, might claim that no revolution has occurred.

This contrast in first impressions gained through superficial contact with the two revolutionary countries is but prelude to the divergence of Mexico and the Soviet Union revealed by examination of their respective social philosophies and political procedures.

Analysis, in the first place, of the underlying structure of the two governments brings out their marked dissimilarity. In the U. S. S. R., as is universally known, political

power is exercised by those who subscribe to a comprehensive and well-formulated body of social doctrine. Of the millions, both men and women, who so subscribe, only a fraction, after long and rigorous apprenticeship, succeed in proving themselves duly and truly prepared, worthy and well qualified for the high privilege of membership in the Communist Party. Failure to live up to the standards set by the party, or infraction of its discipline, makes a member liable to expulsion. Membership, accordingly, fluctuates, and has been variously stated to be as low as 1,200,000 and probably never higher than 3,000,000. Political leadership is attainable, ordinarily, only by Party members. The machinery of government, in consequence, is largely in the hands of thoroughly disciplined leaders, knowing, according to their political lights, what they want to achieve, and, theoretically, how to achieve it. Political leaders, though largely drawn from this special group, are "elected representatives" of a democracy whose basis of representation is occupational rather than, as elsewhere, geographical or regional.

In Mexico, owing partially to its historical development and partially to several other factors, the political structure is of totally different character. Representative government of no variety flourishes. Luis Cabrera, Minister of Finance under Carranza, stated in January, 1931: "We have no effective suffrage—there is not a single public official who has really been elected by the people." And again: "The Revolution has accomplished nothing, absolutely nothing, in the solution of our political problems."

Perhaps, as it may well be urged, Mexico in her present stage of development is unprepared for a democratic political structure. Certain it is that she has produced no representative political party from whom an informed or disciplined leadership might be extracted. Leaders in Mexico are for the most part self-selected. Army officers usually, they depend in feudal fashion upon the personal loyalty of their followers. There has been up to the present no Mexican army that could in strictness be termed national. Armies, as a natural result, have been dominant in Mexican political life. As Cabrera puts it, "In a country where there is no effective suffrage, political crises are decided and governments set up and overthrown at the muzzle of the rifle." Five times since the Revolution this has been demonstrated. That this dominance may wane is, perhaps, indicated by the justly celebrated Six-Year Plan which, out of well over a hundred pages, devotes a scant half-page to the army. Natural, too, as a result of military political influence, is the failure of any sound social philosophy to crystallize in an effective political organization. Individual Mexicans, here and there, understand the world they live in; but Mexico as a nation has, to date, no distinctive politico-social philosophy of her own. Into her Constitution, in 1917, to be sure, there were written two astonishingly revolutionary Articles. Under that Constitution, however, her successive governments, driven from their essential conservatism by the exigencies of a world in post-bellum misery, have merely from time to time attempted

self-preservation by an expedient program of liberal and excellent, though scarcely revolutionary reforms.

This contrast between Soviet and Mexican procedure is observable even with respect to the most fundamental of revolutionary doctrines, the redistribution of the ownership of land. In both countries land-hunger was a prime stimulus to political upheaval. Initiated in 1911 by Zapata in the State of Morelos, the idea of land-seizure spread quickly, without benefit of communist propaganda, through a population of 16,000,000 people, the bulk of whom do not know that Karl Marx ever existed. The need of land was basic in Mexico as in Russia. The peasantry of both nations, moreover, had long practised communal ownership and operation of land. The Russian *mir* and the Mexican *ejido* were designed according to the same pattern. The "title" of each was vested in the village; the families of each were given the privilege, which became a duty, of farming their individual allotments. In Mexico, therefore, as in Russia, the peasantry was psychologically prepared for any extension of land-communalization the Revolution might accomplish. What transpired in Russia all the world knows. The complete nationalization of land in the Soviet Union and the development of large-scale collective farming are universally familiar. What happened, what is still happening, in Mexico with reference to its agrarian problem, is not nearly so well known, even by many Mexicans. Certainly no Mexican government has attempted, or is likely to attempt, the abolition of private property in land. The very essence of the revolutionary

program, as revealed in the Constitution (Article 27), is the creation of more and more landowners. In practice, this is accomplished by forced transfer of land from the landed gentry to their erstwhile peons. Expropriation, no doubt! The expropriated acres are, however, paid for by the Federal Government with its own twenty-year five per cent bonds, the price paid being set, with a grim humor, at 110% of the assessed valuation previously determined for taxation purposes, by the gentlemanly owners themselves. The bonds, be it noted, are currently quoted around one tenth of their face value. Naturally, these transactions are "viewed with alarm" by possessors of large estates. Naturally, also, they do what they can to preserve their holdings intact. Though the large *haciendas*, indeed, have succeeded in remaining practically untouched, yet, according to latest census reports, the total area of lands transferred to communities of peasants amounts, thus far, to 11,000,000 hectares (27,500,000 acres). The social consequences of this process are noteworthy. It is an important factor in the virtual extirpation of peonage from Mexico. It gives to the economically humble citizen a new self respect. That it holds the solution of the agrarian problem, however, is gravely to be doubted; it has been publicly doubted by ex-President Calles. Its tendency, though mildly confiscatory, is not toward land-nationalization. In this basic matter the Mexican and Soviet procedures are at odds.

The Russian and Mexican revolutionary programs are more akin with respect to the Church. The Constitution

of the U. S. S. R., it may be recalled, specifically provides for complete liberty of religious and of anti-religious propaganda. Religion, itself, publicly declared by Lenin to be the opiate of the people, is in official disfavor. The Mexican revolutionary position, though not so outspoken as the Russian, is no less inimical to ecclesiastical foundations. In both countries churches are open and frequently well attended—some 50,000 in the Soviet Union. In neither land, except for recent, though not universal, developments, is one molested at devotions. The influence of the clergy upon the masses (particularly in Mexico) continues to be undeniably potent. The Confessional for one thing is an active institution. Shrines still draw their candle-bearing thousands. But the Church, in Mexico as in Russia, deprived by expropriation of its lands and other forms of wealth, restricted in the number of its ministering officials, denied the right, basic to its function, of giving instruction to the young, has completely lost its ancient and tremendous political power. The separation of Church and State, achieved equally by the Russian Revolution and the Mexican, was, in the pristine sense of the word, radical—it went to the root of the matter.

Markedly in contrast with the likeness of the two countries in their revolutionary handling of ecclesiasticism is their pronounced dissimilarity of treatment accorded the sex which most consistently supports the Church. Women in the Soviet Union are the equals of men; in Mexico they are in every respect man's inferior. Their status, according to Cabrera, is one of "virtual domestic slavery." The Mexi-

can peasant woman walks barefooted the dusty trails of the maguey plantation, her man, mounted on a burro preceding her. Even in a progressive cooperative community—the *ejido*, Estancia, for instance—the visitor meets only men. The women of the place are all discreetly within doors and out of sight. The bourgeois Mexican woman, despite metropolitan advantages, is similarly submerged. Her place, without question, is in the home—especially evenings, awaiting her lord and master's late return. Her centers of activity are the medieval three: the kitchen, the nursery, the church. Legally, since the Revolution, she has the privilege (seldom exercised) of suing for divorce—an initial step toward emancipation. Legally, however, she may not yet leave the country unaccompanied by her husband unless she procures his written consent. That she may not vote goes without saying in a country where manhood suffrage has yet to be achieved. No woman has held high Mexican office, nor sat in the Chamber of Deputies. The one woman ever elected to the Mexican Chamber was denied her seat by that exclusively masculine body. Only one woman, be it noted, is numbered among the prominent Mexicans who annually address the Seminar in Mexico. Indications that this condition may be undergoing modification can be found. Of recent years several women have been admitted to the practice of both law and medicine in the Federal District. Half a dozen women play in the Symphony Orchestra under Chávez. Clerical positions are no longer filled exclusively by men. Co-education, though alien to the training and temper of the people, gets a foot-

hold here and there. Girls studying at El Mexe—one of the Federal agricultural schools—appear publicly in overalls. In overalls! Unmistakable symptom, distinctly indicative of Emancipation! The Mexican woman, however, has a long road to travel before she can compete with her Soviet sisters who run tractors, drive streetcars, fly airplanes, enter all trades and professions, participate in government, serve as ambassadors, and, in general, enjoy a personal integrity which makes them the equal of men.

Another unquestionably dissimilar consequence of the Russian and Mexican Revolutions is their respective judicial and penal procedure. The dungeons of the Mexican island of Ulua were evacuated, somewhat impertinently, perhaps, by American marines; the fortress of Peter and Paul at Leningrad was abandoned as a prison by the bolsheviks themselves. In Mexico, asserts Luis Cabrera, distinguished certainly as a jurist, legal procedures are “antiquated to the degree of stultification.” In the Soviet Union, all the ancient trappings of the courts have been renounced and an interesting attempt is made to arrive by informal and common-sense methods at something approaching justice. In Mexico, again to quote Cabrera, “we have no justice.” Justly or unjustly, both countries commit their criminal offenders to jail. Mexican prisons, as a rule, depart very little from the medieval pattern still to be found in the lands which border her and elsewhere. The Soviet prison, run with the enlightenment of a Thomas Mott Osborn, and dominated by ideas alien even to his advanced thinking, is an institution where

Society's derelicts are hospitalized. The death penalty, except for criminal members of the Communist Party, is abolished. Pronouncement of sentence, in Soviet formula, reads: "You are condemned to be improved."

Mexican and Russian policies with respect to public health approximate a common goal. Both governments are confronted with popular ignorance of hygiene and universal superstition with respect to drugs and healing. Mexican mothers painstakingly shield their babies from the hazards of fresh air, wrapping them up, completely out of sight, in the generous folds of their shawls. Peasants and laborers, men and women alike, thousands upon thousands of them throughout the Republic, cover their mouths with any available portion of their soiled garments, doing their best as they walk along to avoid breathing even the sun-warmed air of a Summer afternoon. Against this ignorance the Mexican government fights vigorously. Open-air schools, for which the Mexican climate is most propitious, have been established, and are increasing in number. Free milk dispensaries may be found near such schools. Vaccination is compulsory, and sometimes in remote districts is effected, if need be, with the aid of troops. Mexican citizens, arriving from abroad, are vaccinated at the frontier. Vermin-infested citizens of the Capital, apprehended by authorized officials, are conveyed to a public bathhouse, subjected to soap and hot water, and released in clothing new-washed and sterilized. Under government sponsorship, new homes are being built for workingmen, modern in their sanitation, adequate in fenestration, and,

though altogether unpretentious, palatial in comparison with the dingy quarters occupied by the average working-man's family. Most notable in this drive for public health are the parks—playgrounds for the people in the poorer sections of the community. The visitor to the City of Mexico, who, dwelling in its fashionable section, fails to discover evidence of the Revolution, should be taken to the *Parque Balbuena*. There, as in the more famous Park of Rest and Culture in Moscow, he may see the proletariat healthfully at play. All sports are encouraged. There are fields splendidly laid out for football, baseball, and track-meets; courts for basketball, handball, and tennis; two excellent outdoor swimming pools, one for either sex; a large and well equipped gymnasium; a moving picture theater; an open-air theater; an admirable nursery school patronized to the last available seat; a library; refreshment booths; and grandstands. Prior to the Revolution no Mexican government provided thus for the well-being of its people. In Cuernavaca, too, Capital of the State of Morelos, one finds another such public playground, not, however, created by the people (or their government) for themselves, but the gift of their best-known fellow citizen, ex-President Calles. Other factors in the promotion of public health—such as sanatoria, water-supply, drainage systems—are not yet so well developed as in the Soviet Union; but the National Revolutionary Party, noting these deficiencies, promises in its Six-Year Plan increasingly to graduate the Federal appropriation for the Department of Health from 3.4% of the total expenditures in 1934 (which

exceeds all previous records) to 5.5% in 1939, and pledges itself to effective campaigns of persuasive elementary instruction in hygiene (*efectivas campanas de persuasión e instrucción higiénica elemental*). Such instruction is cardinal in Russia.

Public instruction, under the Mexican Revolution, is in a great many other respects similar in motivation, purpose, and scope to education under the Communists. The educational achievements of both Revolutions are remarkable. Religious education they both abolished. The Mexican prohibition applies to primary schools; the Communist, to all educational levels in which students are under twenty-one years of age. No private school may be founded in the Soviet Union. Mexico permits private schools if independent of ecclesiastical support. Both Revolutions have greatly increased the number of schools and diminished the percentage of the populations which was illiterate. The Mexican emphasis has been upon technical and rural education. Industrial schools, functioning in accord with the labor provisions of the Constitution (Article 123), now total 1,400. Rural schools number at present about 8,500, and, if the government succeeds in carrying out the educational proposals of the Six-Year Plan, will be over 19,000 by 1940. The current Federal budget allocates fifteen per cent to education; the Plan advocates a minimum of twenty per cent at the close of its six-year term. The Soviet Federal budget devoted twenty-two per cent in 1928 to education; in 1932, twenty-six per cent. For military purposes, the contrast is interesting to note, the Soviet budge-

tary allowance in 1928 was ten per cent; the Mexican military expenditure is considerably greater than either its current educational allotment or its greater budget proposed for 1940. In czarist days about fifteen per cent of the eligible youth (mainly boys) received an education in Russia. In 1929, under revolutionary auspices, this percentage had risen to seventy-eight; it is now approaching its goal of 100%—boys and girls alike, of course, included. Co-education, universally employed in the U. S. S. R., is rare in Mexico (Latin attitude, Indian tradition, Church influence?), and is limited, with negligible exceptions such as the *Escuela Nacional Preparatoria*, to the merest youngsters. The splendid new elementary school now being erected in Mexico City on the site of the old prison of *Belén* is designed for segregation of the sexes. Exceptional too is the previously mentioned nursery school in *El Parque Balbuena*. In the Soviet Union, on the contrary, such pre-kindergarten work is widely accepted. Workers in many factories have supplemented the government program of education by establishing their own *crèche*. Education in the bolshevik land begins very young—it might fairly be said to be pre-natal. It ends, seriously speaking, only at the grave. Aside from these extremes, the official basis of Soviet education is a nine-year primary-elementary course in a system which, like that of another democracy, is “universal, free, and compulsory.”

One noteworthy aspect of educational technique, successfully employed both within and outside the Soviet school, is Visual Instruction. Of this the Mexican educator

knows, apparently, very little. In the United States and other countries, of course, visual instruction is known and feebly functions; but it was reserved to the bolsheviks, driven to it, no doubt, by the illiteracy of the Russian masses, to develop this technique most amply. Inside the school, where, as elsewhere, seeing is believing, visual aids to instruction (a globe, for instance) are obviously useful: a series of pictures illustrating proper methods of personal hygiene or acceptable domestic arrangements, or advisable procedures in the care of infant brothers and sisters. Beyond the schoolhouse, reaching adults as well as children, visual means of imparting information or conveying ideas are equally valuable. Any advertising man knows this. Soviet educators are advertisers. Their billboards, however, instead of threatening your sales-resistance with the unsubstantiated assurance that something or other satisfies or preserves schoolgirl complexions or is worth walking a mile for, attempt to persuade the passerby that drunkenness is an evil leading to disaster, that tractors used cooperatively are superior to oxen used individually, that government farms paying ten per cent are good investments and should be held by all patriotic citizens, that peace is a national desideratum. On one crucial occasion, outside of the educational system, the Mexican authorities similarly "educated" the peasants (in regard to the land question) by circulating copies of a now-historic drawing made to order for the crisis by Diego Rivera. Generally, however, Mexico has not developed this technique. Nor does she make use, as the bolsheviks persistently do, of

moving pictures, dramatic productions, art galleries, and museums. A picture like "Abort," or a visual aid such as an anti-religious museum, cannot at present be utilized for instructional purposes by any government other than that at Moscow.

Unique in this aspect of its revolutionary technique, the Soviet Union is not without rival in another, and more vital, matter: the status of the workers. Mexico can by no stretch of the imagination be termed a dictatorship of the proletariat; yet, by one of history's unpredictable turns, the Mexican Constitution, nine months before the bolsheviks came to power, embodied within itself (Article 123) the most enlightened labor code of modern times outside of Soviet Russia. In addition to adopting the usual provisions urged everywhere upon governments by labor leaders (the eight-hour day, double pay for overtime, no overtime for women and children, no private employment agencies, the right to unionize, the legality of strikes, employers' liability, payment in cash, equal pay for equal works, etc.), this famous document included the cancellation of all workers' debts previously contracted; limited to one month's wages the amount an employer could withhold in liquidation of any subsequent indebtedness; provided either immediate reinstatement or, at the worker's option, three months' wages to be paid by the employer to any employee discharged for participation in a legal strike or for membership in a union; created minimum wage boards and boards for the arbitration of labor disputes; ordered large employers of labor, such as owners of

mines and plantations, to provide for their workers a school, a dispensary, a *plaza* of specified dimensions, and sanitary houses the monthly rental of which may be no greater than one-half of one per cent of their assessed valuation. Anti-capitalistic as these provisions seem, they were placed in the Constitution not by a militant group of radicals hostile to capitalism (there were, in fact, only two representatives of labor at the Constitutional Convention), but by delegates of liberal and even conservative views; and the rigorous proposals of Article 123 (Carranza's payment to Labor for services rendered) were directed not in the least against the social effects of modern industrialism but rather against the anti-Mexican practices of foreign and often absentee Industrialists. Organized Mexican Labor thus, by a turn of political fortune vested in infancy with full Constitutional authority, naturally allied itself with Carranza's government, organized itself into the CROM (*Confederación Regional Obreros Mexicanos*), proudly saw its leader taking a prominent part in the President's cabinet, and settled down to conservatism and decay. It is not a revolutionary body. It tolerates nothing communistic. Through Article 123 it no doubt pits its strength against the capitalist—as far as industry can stand it. But no further! It advocates no substitute for capitalism. It believes in private profit. It is on the side of those who want to make the capitalistic system work.

This, obviously, is not the doctrine of the disciples of Karl Marx, whose every effort, as seen in the Soviet Union, is to supplant capitalism with something they conceive to

be infinitely better. In this effort, of course, the Soviet worker encounters nothing comparable to the industrialists of Mexico or other countries. He lives in a society the basic concept of which is the abolition of those private profits for which alone the industrialist risks his capital. The employer under whom the Soviet worker finds it advisable to organize is, accordingly, no individual capitalist or small group of wealthy stockholders, but the State itself—an employer powerful enough to monopolize the entire Federal banking system; to erect the greatest dam and hydroelectric plant of Europe; to say "Let there be a thousand miles of new railway," and lo it is done; to appropriate \$250,000,000 to make the Turkestan desert blossom, with cotton, as the rose; to make profits from its multifarious industrial activities sufficient, as in 1928, to contribute to the Federal exchequer, for the prosecution of its planned economy, twelve times as much as was raised by taxation; to accomplish, in short, for the population of one-sixth of this world's habitable surface, an economic, political, and ideological transition of such magnitude as to constitute, if not soon reversed, a genuine threat to the continuance of a capitalist basis for western civilization. No such threat is implicit in the changes now taking place in Mexico. Her Revolution, like the American of 1776, is but a phase of, and within, the established social order. The Communist Revolution, challenging the current sorry scheme of things entire, is the first of its kind in history. Of the type of revolution which demands only reform within the capitalist system, the Mexican—who knows?—may prove to be the last.

## INDIAN MEXICO

by Moisés Sáenz

NOT long ago I sat in on a round-table discussion. On my right was a venerable man, a leader of distinction in the field of education during the Diaz regime, a man alert and able to this day. He has been not only a great educator, but also a great thinker and a profound student of life in Mexico. The discussion concerned the necessity for adapting our educational program to fit the varied groups in our country: the Indian, the *mestizo*, and so on.

"I deny the existence of the Indian in Mexico," this man said in earnest. "We have only one group and one class of people—the Mexicans. It is true," he continued, "that there are certain ethnic groups which must still be considered as apart from us. But for all purposes—political and cultural, in fact and in intention—we are only one people. We are all Mexicans. We gain nothing for our program of nationalism and social reconstruction through the analyses of population which some people nowadays like to make. We gain nothing, and by thinking in that way we may be damaging our sense of a coherent and homogeneous nationality."

The argument seemed plausible. But was this man right? Mexico, it is true, is consciously Mexican, and is Indian only unconsciously. The management of the country has

been Mexican; the social theory and the national ideal are certainly Mexican, and not Indian. It is the Mexicans, not the Indians, who have made the revolutions, who have set up governments and made laws. But I found myself denying the correctness of my friend's point of view. The Indian in Mexico is, it seems to me, a reality, a living, objective reality. I believe that the Indian is more than merely a traditional factor in our lives, that he is also a contemporary determining factor, and offers by the mere fact of his existence possibilities for the future which cannot be ignored.

I believe, furthermore—and I told my friend this—that we gain nothing and lose much by trying to reason the Indian out of our reality. Indeed, I told him, this attitude is responsible for the neglect in which three or four million Indians—a sizable part of our population—have been left.

This man is not an enemy of the Indians. He is simply one of a very large class of people, perhaps less numerous today than twenty years ago, who think either that the Indian is an insignificant element in our national life or that the natural growth of the country according to the pattern and standard set up by the Mexican will adequately take care of the Indian element. I myself believe that, for the sake of both logic and humanity, it is better to consider the Indian as an actual factor in our national life.

For the Indian is with us as well as within us. He is present ethnically if we consider the more than eighty racial groups recognized by students. Some of these groups

are small and relatively unimportant. Others—the Aztecs, for example—are numerous, and preserve important traits and accomplishments. The groups are distinct in language, folklore, and culture. A few remain in the nomadic state, and have a wholly primitive and folkloric culture. Some are barbarous and war-loving. But in some regions they are the keepers of a cultural tradition which even today seems valuable and worth preserving. Most of them are aware of Mexico as a reality, at least in a vague and general way. The Aztecs, the most important of these ethnic groups, most of whom live on the central plateau, have been in close contact with Mexican civilization and manners. Spain influenced the Indians in Mexico importantly and permanently, so that, culturally speaking, it is hard to find pure Indians in Mexico.

This does not mean, however that the Mexican Indian groups have all in some degree assimilated the foreign influences brought to bear upon them. The fact is, indeed, quite the contrary. Some three million Indians do not speak or understand the Spanish language. And, despite superficial appearances, the Indian mentality and culture function today much as they did in pre-Cortesian times.

What has been changed or destroyed by invading influences and agents is the Indian's institutional life. The individual has suffered from the general disintegration of the social fabric, though the personal ways of the survivors remain primitive and different in each ethnic group. Ethnically and culturally speaking, then, we have in Mexico not only the Indian, but also Indians.

Being Indian in Mexico connotes not only a biological or ethnical fact, but also a social condition. This is partly because each of the Indian groups, especially of the larger ones, has its own social organization which either functions independently of the socio-political organization of the country, or overlaps it. In addition to this, the distribution of the Indian population, the fact that it occupies the mountainous and remote regions, its lack of education, and its prevalent economic deficiency have determined almost the same conditions for all the Indian groups.

This fact must be kept in mind if we are to understand the process of racial osmosis by means of which an Indian of pure blood may come to be considered a Mexican—that is, a member of the *mestizo* group—because of nothing more than a change in his economic or intellectual status or of the place in which he lives.

The Indian in Mexico is a subtle reality. All Mexicans carry some portion of that reality within themselves. Everywhere around us there crops out the traditional Indian contribution to culture, folklore, and religion. Some day this intimate Indian Mexico will be described by an acute analyst.

The Indian Mexico I am attempting to describe to you is quite distinct and objective. Its inhabitants live in the same country that we do, some in places near our large cities, others, the larger proportion, live in mountain fastnesses, in the narrow young valleys of the sierras, along the steep flanks of canyons. This Indian Mexico of about four million souls, if we count only those of more or less

pure blood, does not speak our language. Some of it we never see at all. Parts of it have ways of living so exotic to us that if we did observe them we could only think ourselves traveling in a foreign country. Could we be fortunate enough to travel extensively with open eyes through these regions, we would be struck by a picturesque and pathetic human panorama.

The people of this Indian world of ours are dignified and restrained. They are, for the most part, refined in their natural manners. They are gentle and courteous. Hospitality is considered a virtue among them, and they have stern unwritten laws which bind relentlessly. Most of them make beautiful things with their hands, humble artifacts for their own everyday use, toys for their fanciful amusement, ornaments for their rites and ceremonies. They are all unconscious artists, inheritors of an undefined, but vigorous, aesthetic tradition.

Their economic life is simple. They are still men without machines, to use Stuart Chase's happy phrase. Theirs is an agricultural and handicraft culture within a small self-contained and self-sufficient universe. Living in villages is characteristic of those groups which are either more advanced in social organization or more under Spanish influence, but a large part of the inhabitants of Indian Mexico lives scattered over the face of its territory.

All is not well with the Indians of Mexico. *Chiles*, *tortillas*, and beans make up their whole diet. The little patches of land they possess yield hardly enough to fill their stomachs. The use of alcohol is rampant among them,

and immature marriages are the rule in many places. My friend of the round-table was wrong. The Indian in Mexico is a reality, a living, lovable, suffering, challenging reality.

Ever since the arrival of the Spaniards the Indian in Mexico has been the object of interest and curiosity. The friars and missionaries described his ways in lengthy and detailed chronicles. Of these chroniclers, Fr. Bernardino de Sahagun was one of the earliest and most competent. In modern times the Indian in Mexico has been studied with great care by archaeologists, anthropologists, and ethnologists. I still remember the expression of pride on Professor Frederick Starr's face when he told me, some time ago, "I have traveled all over the State of Oaxaca. I have visited every village where typical Indians live. I have measured the crania of every one of these Indians. Not one escaped me."

Here I must confess that the Indian as a subject for scientific investigation, as a candidate for a museum showcase, does not interest me very much. I am far from agreeing with the man who said that the only good Indian is a dead Indian. I have been studying Indians for years, but I have not yet visited the National Museum. I know that there are men there sitting at high desks, dissecting the Indian. I leave them to carry on their work undisturbed.

Naturally I recognize the importance of archaeology, anthropology, ethnology, and all the allied sciences, but insofar as Mexico is concerned I believe that we should consider these studies not as an end in themselves, but as

contributions to, as subsidiaries of, sociology. Therein is where we had failed in Mexico prior to the Revolution. While the National Museum of Ethnology and History was progressing, while costly monographs on the Indian were being published, millions of Indians in Mexico were being criminally neglected, or, what is perhaps worse, exploited unmercifully.

By 1900, expedient rationalization had done away with the Indian; we were all Mexican. There was, to be sure, some romantic sentimentality about our Indian ancestry. Thank God that our gringoism (of which we have plenty) never took the form of being ashamed of our Indian blood. Quite the contrary. It is true that if the pretty girls of our social upper classes ever thought about Indians at all they surely never suspected that they themselves were partly Indian—and that they would have been shocked if anyone had suggested it. But their brothers in the streets, if the occasion arose, would proclaim their Indian ancestry to the world with great pride. But we had no theory about the Indian, and no program for him.

By 1920 the Revolution had evolved, if not a theory about the Indian, at least an ideal concerning him. It was expressed in the word *incorporation*. Cultural incorporation of the Indian was the stated purpose of one of the larger bureaus of the newly instituted National Department of Education. This was, so far as I know, the first official organization created for the purpose of dealing with the Indians as a special factor, and with an aim other than that of scientific research. Soon afterwards, however,

the Bureau of Cultural Incorporation was amalgamated with that of the rural schools. Thus it has remained to this day.

In Mexican procedure and thinking there is a reluctance to consider the Indian as a distinct entity and a special problem. In a certain sense this is fortunate, for it corresponds to a positive attitude that the Indian is entirely one of us and not a subject for redemption. It must be evident that the idea of segregating the Indian has never occurred to us. If we are to think of the Indian as a special factor and problem, we have said, let us think of him for the purpose of incorporating him into the Mexican family. Let us open schools for him, let us teach him Spanish, let us put him into contact with our world in both material and spiritual ways. Let us improve his economic status, create needs within him and then help him, through education and training, to satisfy them. We will not pretend that he is different from us. He shall have full political rights. We will teach him Spanish as a matter of course, and bring to him whatever modicum of civilization we ourselves possess.

This has, in fact, been the attitude of Revolutionary Mexico toward the Indian. On this attitude we have founded the program of incorporation which has, for the most part, been delegated to the Secretariat of Public Education to develop.

I rejoice in our reluctance to make the Indian an object of salvation at the hands of a *mestizo* redeemer. At the same time I claim that the program of Indian incorporation

still lacks completeness and demands closer analysis. The cultural aspect of incorporation has been understood, at least in part, but the economic and political incorporation of our Indian groups is a subject hardly touched upon, even in our thinking.

Two facts will serve to make my point clear. One is with reference to the agrarian situation. The agrarian program of the Revolution has, for the most part, dealt with the division of land, with the breaking up of the larger holdings and the giving of land to the people. The Indian was in no need of such action because, as a rule, he has kept possession of his tiny, quite insufficient patches of land. To have benefited him, the agrarian program would have had to deal with the amalgamation of property rather than its subdivision, with improvement in agricultural methods, and with the implanting of cooperative farming.

The other fact is in the realm of politics. The Indian, whether he knows it or not, is a Mexican citizen. When politics touches him, therefore, he is never considered as possessing a socio-political organization of his own that should be respected, or at least taken into consideration. The politician has been, as far as the Indian is concerned, an invader of the worst sort, without check or restraint.

It is evident, then, that we have not evolved or defined, either politically or economically, a program of incorporation of the Indian.

Revolutionary Mexico has indeed developed a new conscience about the Indian. Our attitude is more intelligent and meaningful than it was in 1910. We have made some

progress towards the formulation of a program of cultural incorporation through the socialized rural school. The teaching of Spanish is one of the tenets of this program. The teaching and practice of hygiene is another, and a certain appreciation of Indian handicrafts is still another. But the program of incorporation is far from well-rounded, and many leaders in Mexico still hold that it is, at the most, merely a concern of the Secretariat of Public Education. The Revolution has not been entirely fair to our Indians. It may take another revolution to accomplish that.

Even in what is being done we are far from satisfaction. Our program of cultural incorporation is too one-sided; some aspects of it are as bad as the program of Americanization in the United States. In approaching the Indian we are too imbued with an idea of superiority. We have our Mexican complexes; we are interested only in making of every Indian a good Mexican. Our appreciation of Indian values itself is too superficial, and we have in reality little respect for the personality of the Indian. Only exceptionally has any systematic and comprehensive effort been made for the cultural reclamation of the Indian.

I have repeatedly been asked if the Indian has anything to contribute to Mexico, whether he is to be counted an asset or a liability. My answer is that, whether asset or liability, he is unquestionably a real factor in Mexican life, a living element we can neither ignore nor destroy. I believe that the Indian does have elements of positive value to contribute to Mexican life. He has restraint and dignity; he has ethic standards; he has physical and moral vitality.

## RENASCENT MEXICO

Now that the world has seen the evils and dangers of a machine economy, the Indian's manual ability should be an asset. His love of the soil is another valuable trait. His artistic talent is a strain we would do well to preserve. Even certain aspects of his socio-political organization might well be incorporated into our statutes. His sense of community and his genius for communal cooperation are virtues greatly needed at the present time.

Our program of incorporation will have to be made over into a more mutual process. Indian Mexico will have to be more of a determining factor in the political, economic, and cultural life of our country. Then, perhaps, we shall be able to make valuable use of the best traits of the Indian.

## MEXICAN FOLK DANCES

*by Frances Toor*

THE Mexican folk are Indian. Over half of Mexico's population still lives in a folkloric state. Many of their customs—such as those attending birth, marriage, and death—contain pre-Conquest elements which centuries of Christianity have been unable to exterminate. The conquerors found it easy to destroy idols and pyramids, but not customs, which could be practised secretly.

The heritage of Indian art also continues to live. For a long time the Indians were forbidden the field of fine arts, but it was an economic necessity to permit them such practical arts as pottery, weaving, and the like. The new religion required new temples, and it was the Indians who had to construct and decorate them. They were also permitted to paint religious miracles. Thus their great plastic facility was kept alive.

The pre-Conquest Mexicans had achieved a high degree of expressiveness, not only in architecture, sculpture, and the handicrafts, but also in music and dancing. The early chroniclers wrote of schools of music and dancing. Songs and dances were practised daily in connection with religion, war, and ordinary diversion, and it was of these arts especially that the early missionaries wisely took advantage for their religion. They taught the Indians the catechism

and singing, and substituted Christian dramas and dances, still performed today, for the heathen ones.

It seems that the shock of the Conquest and their subsequent condition of slavery left the Indians a sad and silent people. For though the Mexican *mestizo* sings much and well, the Indians scarcely ever sing except in connection with religious rituals. Even then their voices do not come out clear and full, but remain in their throats, as though they were ashamed and afraid. The Indians who sing folk-songs are few, generally of mixed blood, and their voices are soft. But the same observations are not valid in regard to dancing. The purer the Indian, the better he dances. They have never lost their agility or their dramatic power which, with their plastic arts, so roused the admiration of the conquerors.

The dances which I shall describe, and some few others, are the only Indian dances not connected with religion. Even those which are clearly pre-Conquest survivals, like the Yaqui Deer Dance, the *Tutiguri* of the Tarahumaras, and some others, are adulterated with Christianity. But if it is true that none of them is free of Christian elements, it is equally true that even those introduced by the Spaniards have acquired Indian characteristics in expression, movements, music, and words. I have seen social dancing in Indian villages, with our one-steps and other familiar dance tunes so changed that they had in reality become something new.

The *jarabe* is the most popular and widespread of the folk dances in Mexico, as it is danced both by Indians and

by mixed and white city people. It is a direct descendant of the *seguidillas manchegas* of the Spanish region of La Mancha. At about the middle of the Eighteenth Century, when it was called the *jarabe gitano*, this dance was introduced into Mexico. The steps of this dance, and of all others introduced by the Spaniards, are called *zapateados*, being necessarily danced in shoes, *zapatear* meaning to beat time with the shoes.

Although, since the Eighteenth Century, the Spanish tunes and words have acquired distinctly Mexican characteristics, the name *jarabe* has remained. As prosaically translated in a dictionary this word means "syrup, or any sweet drink," but it seems to have been popular as a name applied to dances in Mexico. Various dances accused to the Inquisition of being indecent were called variously *jarabe gatuna*, *pan de jarabe*. The dance as we know it is called either simply the *jarabe* or the *jarabe tapatío* (of Jalisco), from the fact that it developed in Guadalajara, the capital city of the State of Jalisco.

The urbanized *jarabe* is well known in the United States, being danced there often by both Mexicans and Americans who have learned it in the Summer School of the University in Mexico City. Pavlova and La Argentina have danced it during and after visits to Mexico. It is taught in the Mexican public schools, and on occasions hundreds of pupils dance it in the Stadium. No Mexican program is complete without a *jarabe*. It is danced in theaters, out of doors, at rodeos, and never without joyous response. Even city audiences unbend while it is being danced. There is

cheering, whistling, hand-clapping, and the high-pitched rancher's yell, expressive of real gusto. There is irresistible appeal in its gayety and beauty.

This city *jarabe* is a conventionalized and abbreviated version of the old *jarabe* still danced in many villages. The music consists of nine gaily captivating melodies and steps. The whole lasts about ten minutes. The dancers move around each other, face to face, but always some distance apart. At the end comes "The Dove," during which the man follows his partner as she dances around in the broad brim of his sombrero, imitating the courtship of doves. As she stoops to pick up the hat, he passes his right leg over her, and they finish by facing the audience to do "The Diana." The rhythm, strongly marked by the feet, is passionate and fiery, and beats into the blood.

The courtship element of this dance, slow pursuit by the man, subtle coquetry by the girl, may have an Indian origin. The Huicholes of the Sierras of Nayarit and Jalisco have a dance called the *guajalote* (turkey) in which the male thus courts the female, following her around in a circle. The Indians, however, are never coquettish. They dance with downcast eyes, scarcely ever moving the upper part of the body. The men have a greater variety of steps than the women, and dance more rapidly and lightly.

The costumes for the city *jarabe*, like its music and steps, are conventionalized. The woman wears a *China poblana* (China-girl of Puebla) dress: a long, full, red flannel skirt with a green yoke, profusely trimmed with spangles of all colors; a white, square-necked, short-sleeved

*camisa*, or shirt, with broad embroidered bands around the neck and sleeves, usually of silk or very fine beads. The *China* wears beads and earrings and—unless her hair is bobbed—braids tied with red ribbons. Her high-heeled slippers are either of red or green satin or of leather. A fine *rebozo*, worn over the shoulders and crossed in front, completes the costume. The *charro* (horseman) suit of the man is intended for riding, and he often dances with spurs. The trousers are long and tight, decorated with rows of silver buttons. To these are added a soft shirt, a flowing red tie, and a large, embroidered felt *sombrero*. The city *Chinas*, especially stage dancers, either make their skirts short or put hoops in them, so as to show their legs as they dance, and both *Chinas* and *charros* embroider their costumes with eagles and other designs to attract attention rather than to express good taste.

The village *jarabe* is very different, but even it has changed with the times. Those who remember it as it was danced fifty years ago say, with a sad shake of the head, "It is not what it used to be." The best *jarabes* are danced in the States of Guanajuato, Jalisco, Colima, and Nayarit, particularly in the region known as La Costa. Often it is danced spontaneously, wherever there are people and music. But when it is planned, a wooden platform is placed over an excavated area, or over buried jars, which produce greater resonance. The music is furnished by orchestras called *mariaches* and men who sing falsetto. The dance sometimes lasts for hours, with the dancers improvising steps, and the singers verses.

In villages, neither girls nor men dress up specially for the *jarabe*. In the Costa region, the girls wear full, long black flannel skirts and the usual embroidered *camisa* and *rebozo*; the young ranchers, a gay and racy lot, wear a unique *charro* suit: black cloth coat, white trousers, and high black boots with red showing at the top. Their spurs are silver, the fine leather saddles silver-trimmed. The blinders for the horses' eyes are also partly or entirely of silver. A handsome *sombrero* completes the costume, a pistol is stuck in the belt, and a *machete* into the saddle. The spirited horses are so well trained that at the sound of music they begin to dance. Often their masters ride them into *cantinas*, where they put their front hooves up on the counter, and drink liquor from glasses. There is much drinking, often quarreling and shouting, always singing and dancing. The ranchers are brave, chivalrous, and happy, and their *jarabes* are the gayest in Mexico.

*Jarabes*—or *fandangos*, as they sometimes are called—are also danced at Indian weddings, and even at wakes over children. In Chicomcuac, an ancient Aztec village in the District of Texcoco, the dancing at an Indian wedding is begun with a *jarabe*. León Venado, the famous *sarape*-weaver of that village, described it to me. "When the dance begins, the musicians have to play a piece called the *jarabe tapatio*. The parents of the bride dance with plates of food in their hands, others with jars of *pulque* on their heads, and two persons each with a *chiquihuite*, or basket filled with *tamales*, and a live turkey." The dance and the con-

tents of the baskets are thanks to the parents for the gift of the bride.

As the dance proceeds, the musician playing the large guitar sings homebrewed verses, such as:

How beautiful you have grown  
Like a stalk of wheat.  
I hope you grow up soon  
So I may marry you.

Down these straight streets  
I saw a lemon run.  
A kiss for the girls  
And a slap for the old ones.

I wished that I might be loved  
Like the flowers in the field  
Because they would treasure me  
As they treasure love.

The tunes accompanying *jarabes* are called *sones*, a name dating from the Eighteenth Century. The word literally means agreeable sound, though its specific use here is not clear. They are lively dance tunes, with words that are sometimes tender, but more often picaresque, and are different in various regions. As they are true folksongs, it frequently happens that songs with like titles show variations in tunes or words in various States.

The music is furnished, in Colima, Nayarit, and Jalisco, by *mariaches*. They consist of a large guitar, called a

*guitarrón*, an ordinary guitar, a smaller stringed instrument called a *huivela*, and a violin. In such places as Tepic and Guadalajara, *mariaches* stroll about the marketplaces, playing and singing to anybody willing to pay a few *centavos* for each *son*. During fairs connected with religious holidays, there are many *mariaches*, and it is not unusual for couples to start dancing in the little outdoor restaurants at any time. Such dances are called either *sones* or *jarabes*.

There are *sones* in which the dancers show great skill. One of these, from Jalisco, is called "Dancing the Bottle," and in it the man and woman take turns dancing over a full bottle of *mezcal*, or some other beverage, without knocking it over. The words urge the dancers to "dance the bottle" and if they overturn it, they have to refill it. In many places the dancers tie a knot in a handkerchief or sash, and untie it with their feet while they dance.

The *jarana* has much in common with the *jarabe*. It is the most popular dance of Yucatán. The music has the same lively Spanish character as that of the *sones*, but is without words. The name, derived, it is said, from that of a small, stringed instrument, means literally noisy diversion. Its steps are also *zapateados*.

Any number of couples may perform the *jarana* at one time, facing each other in rows. In villages, it is often the *mayordomo*, or municipal president, who invites the girls to dance, and they do not know who their partners will be until they face them. The man dances with one hand behind him, the girl holds her skirt, and both imitate castanets with their fingers. As the couples pass each other,

they curve their arms upward and exchange glances. During the dance, the musicians frequently stop playing, and someone shouts, "Bomba!" This is a signal for the men to improvise compliments in verse. When a girl dances well, the man puts his hat on her head, and there is much play in his getting it back.

The music is furnished by *jaranas*, drums, cornets, and sometimes the *guiros* (gourds) so common in Cuba. During every *jarana*, there is struck up a *Torito*, or little bull, a *son* without words differing in melody, but not in object, from the *sones* of Jalisco and Vera Cruz. The couples play at bullfighting as they dance, the girls enacting the bulls.

There is no conventionalized city version of the *jarana*, but it is more intimate and important in villages than in cities. It is a village dance, used at weddings and other festivities. Many matches are made at the *jaranas*, as they are often the only opportunity the young people have to meet. Among the "city *mestizos*," as Indians are called in Yucatán, the usual dance program is made up of social dances, with *jaranas* as extras.

There is no special costume for the *jarana*. The Yucatecans are spotlessly clean, even those who live in huts, and always wear white. Women of all social classes wear the same type of *huipil*: square-necked, sleeveless, and sufficiently long to form the whole dress. The materials vary, but all of them are hand-embroidered about the neck, sleeves, and bottom, in bright-colored flower designs. The women do their hair in braids tied with colored ribbons. Their jewelry consists of fine gold filigree rosaries and

earrings. All Yucatecans are short, slender, and finely featured. With the men also in white, a *jarana* is a beautiful spectacle.

The folk dance next in importance to the *jarabe* in popularity and beauty of tones and words is the *huapango*. This is danced in the State of Vera Cruz, and is especially interesting in the Huasteca regions of that state, Puebla, Hidalgo, San Luis Potosí, and Tamaulipas. It is possible that the *huapango* is related to the pre-Conquest rhythmic dances called *mitotes*, as they were danced, as *huapangos* are, on wooden platforms, and were similarly rhythmic. Also, the name itself is Aztec, derived from *cuahtpanco-cuaitl*, meaning log or wood, *ipan*, on or over, and *co*, place. But the steps are *zapateados* and the music Spanish, both of which, like those of the *jarabe*, have been mexicanized.

At one time the *huapango* was danced by the higher social classes in Vera Cruz, but it became the dance of the *mestizos* living in the Indian tradition. They have incorporated it into their festivities. The *sones* which make up the music of this dance are also called *huapangos*. They are sung in falsetto to the accompaniment of guitars, *jaranas*, violins, and sometimes harps. The *huapango* rhythm is produced by bringing down the closed fist or open hand on the strings for the last note of each measure.

Some of the *huapango* verses by popular poets are as beautiful as any in the Spanish language. I first heard them during a horseback trip through some of the Totonac Villages of Vera Cruz. It was September, the month of

heaviest rain. On our second day out, through beautiful country, crossing swollen streams and mud up to the horses' bellies, we arrived in a tiny village for the night. There was no hotel, not even a *mesón* where we might have been housed with the mule-drivers, nothing but huts. We found shelter in the village's one store, where sacking was spread on a damp dirt floor for us.

I made friends with the owner, and asked him if he could secure some *huapangueros* to sing and dance for us that very night, as we were going on in the morning. He said that he would try, but as hours passed and they did not come, I soon forgot about them in sleep. I seemed to have slept an eternity when I was awakened by many people coming in. They were our *huapangueros*, some of them dressed in white even on that rainy night. They had two *jaranas*, a guitar, and a violin. My companions were annoyed at the disturbance, but in spite of being terribly tired, I was awake in an instant. We made a curious group in candlelight. None of us had undressed, or even removed our wet riding boots, from fear of being unable to get them on again the next morning. There we were, in our outlandishly civilized clothes, the Indians in white *calzones*, taking it all as a natural occurrence. They sang for a long time, many of their most popular *huapangos*, and it seemed to me that I was hearing their soft falsetto voices in a dream. But I wrote down some of the verses. Here are some of the loveliest, from the *huapango*, *Cielito Lindo*, *Lovely Little Heaven*—a term of endearment:

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When I talk to you of love  
And you don't listen,  
The flowers grow sad,  
The birds silent.

Ay, ay, ay . . .  
Ay! but when you answer,  
The birds and flowers,  
*Cielito lindo,*  
Rejoice with me.

So that you no longer doubt  
Of my love,  
Take the knife,  
Open my heart.

Ay, ay, ay . . .  
Ay! but be careful, child  
Don't hurt yourself,  
You are inside.

One of the men showed me some of the steps, too, but I did not really see the dance until some years later, during another horseback trip through another part of Vera Cruz.

The dance is done on a wooden platform, sometimes raised high above the ground on posts, which—when permanent—has a thatched roof. In places where the *huapango* has reached a high development, such as Tamaulipas, there is one platform for the best dancers, and another for the musicians. When the music starts, the men step before the

girls with whom they wish to dance, raise their hats in silence, and turn around. The girls follow them to their places, where they face each other in two rows. The steps are simple—heel and toe, beating once with the heel and then twice with the toe. The rhythm of the feet with that of the music is most unusual. Every now and then the music changes, indicating that the dancers are to change places. Sometimes the men simply dance in front of, or around, their partners, always with more verve than the girls. In some places the women wear lovely *huipiles*, but in general the costumes are the daily ones of the region.

These *huapangos*—sometimes called *fandangos*—go on for days, but are not monotonous. During the dance, one of the men (women do not sing in them) begins to improvise verses, sometimes with humorous allusions to popular or unpopular spectators, or to a mother-in-law, but most interesting when dealing with love. The climax of a *huapango*, however, is in rivalry for a girl. The rivals begin a challenge in verse, usually improvised to the music of “The White Lily.” The less favored suitor directs insults against the girl, the other defending her while she keeps dancing with downcast eyes, pretending ignorance of her importance. These quarrels sometimes become so heated that the contestants leave the platform to adjust their differences with *machetes* or knives. The spectators feign indifference, and do not interfere, and the stronger, or surviving, suitor wins the girl. In some places, a male spectator may take a girl away from her partner by putting his hat on her head. If she is not pleased, her partner

may remove the hat and dance with it, a hint to the other that he is not wanted. This custom is one of the ways of demonstrating a girl's popularity.

There are certain *sones* popular in all *huapangos*. *El Caiman* and *La Bamba* are played when expert *huapangueros* dance with something balanced on their heads, or the man ties and unties a handkerchief or sash with his feet. When this is about to happen, the other dancers step aside and announce it, and there is much enthusiasm. When the famous *El Torito*, or *Little Bull*, is struck up, the men take out their handkerchiefs and play at bullfighting with their partners. The *huapango* called *Los Panaderos*, or *The Bakers*, is an indication that the musicians want to rest, as well as a suggestion to the men to invite their partners to refreshments. The words say that "It's a great obligation of those who dance to give their partners cake and wine." The men often simply turn their heads, losing themselves among the spectators without supplying the wine and cake, an act which is not taken as an offense.

In many places, the *huapangos* constitute the weekly Saturday night dances, paid for by the town merchants for business reasons. But there are many private *huapangos*, given by rich ranchers for amusement, which last for days. A custom in connection with these latter in Tamaulipas, is for some of the party to come riding in on their spirited horses, break the strings of the harp, and ride away. The others give chase, and the fleeing group, if caught, must pay for the next dances. Wedding *huapangos* last as long as the means of the parents permit. The first is

danced in the best room of the house, the one in which the household altar stands. The couples form a circle, with the bride and groom leading, with downcast eyes. Each dancer carries a small jar of incense in his right hand and flowers in his left hand. Besides the dancers, only the musicians are inside, playing the *son* of the occasion, called *Xochipitzahua*, the verses of which are sung from outside. At the close of the dance, the purification of the bride is symbolized by placing the incense and flowers on the altar. Then the whole group goes outside to join the regular *huapango*. These customs, like all others, vary from region to region. The wedding *huapango* is often the bride's last, as in some places it is considered improper for married women to dance, though men do not lose the privilege.

One of the loveliest and most Indian folk dances is the *canacuas* of the State of Michoacán. It is danced only by young unmarried girls, but in charge of a respected elderly man of the village, called *el carguero*. *Canacuas* is the Tarascan word for crowns. It is given at weddings and to honor important visitors, and nowadays at school festivals in Michoacán, and occasionally in Mexico City. The only men present besides *el carguero* and possible guests, are a violinist and an *indito*, who dances the *jarabe*.

One of the early chroniclers of Michoacán described the *canacuas* in connection with marriage customs as follows: "On the following day, a ceremony of wholly intimate nature took place in the nuptial abode. Youths and maidens assembled, the former with garlands of flowers on their heads, the latter carrying beautiful bouquets, and

after offering the newly married couple gifts of objects useful for the new family, took part in a dance. After the dance, a figure of a child, made of dough, was passed from hand to hand, while allusive songs were being sung about it. The fiesta was called *canacuas*, and still exists in various towns of Michoacán."

The *canacuas* of today is very different. As the songs were never written, the Tarascan texts are now unintelligible even to those who speak the language, and are mixed with Spanish words. The music must also have been transformed, because it is European. It is beautiful, romantic and dreamy, as music of the hot luxuriant countries usually is.

The maidens, or *guaris*, are also beautiful. They dress for the dance in the regional dress: a skirt of many yards of hand-woven material laid in deep plaits in the back, falling over the long narrow sashes like a fan; gaily embroidered *camisas*, with a dark blue scarf with white stripes crossed over the shoulders and tied in the back; and hand-embroidered aprons. The costumes are completed by many strings of colorful beads, earrings, and bright ribbons in the hair. As these *guaris* are often of mixed blood, they move with some self-consciousness, delightfully coquettish.

The guest for whom a *canacuas* is given is asked to sit at a table out of doors, and the *guaris* line up in two rows, carrying gifts of fruit, flowers, pieces of hand-woven clothes, miniature handmade instruments, chocolate-beaters, and other objects, on napkins in the beautifully lacquered Uruapan *jícaras* (bowls). They begin by sing-

ing a greeting, and then offer the fiesta to the guest in both Tarascan and Spanish, mentioning his name. Then follows a dance, with the swaying of their *jícaras* and skirts, as they sing the loveliest of the Tarascan melodies—*The Cinnamon Flower*, a mixture of Tarascan and Spanish: “At the cinnamon flower I sigh, because it reminds me of you. . . .” After this, they form three lines, the first seated, the second kneeling, the third standing, and sing in Tarascan the charming song beginning *Tat niñito* (Good little father), a term applied to images of Christ, the meaning of which seems to have been lost. After this comes a section of great variety, the most spectacular part of the dance. It begins with *El Compadrito* (The good little friend). The music is both sad and happy, but closes gaily in the singing of simple verses. It ends with all seated on the ground in a square. They begin a dialogue in Tarascan, commenting on the hardships of the road, their fatigue, and whether the next section should be a song or dance. At this point the *indito* and one of the *guaris* sing a dialogue, after which they begin a *jarabe*. It is in this that the individual *guari* can make the most of her charms. Sometimes it is a *jarabe* of the bottle, differing from that of Jalisco. An empty bottle is used, a piece of silver money on the cork. The aim is to dance over and around it without touching the bottle or knocking off the money. Another couple may dance the *jarabe* of the knot, both the man and girl tying a knot in a silk handkerchief. At the close, all join the *jarabe* common to the region.

This outburst of gayety is followed by the sadness of a

soul-stirring love plaint, *La Flor de Changunga*. This is sung by one of the *guaris*, while the others in chorus comment, "Ah, what a thing is love!" The last song, *La Patera*, is a merry one, in which each *guari* in turn offers her gifts to the guest, swaying gracefully as she sings. Every *guari* carries a small branch of *apázcua*, arranged with corn leaves. Some say that this signifies welcome, others that it is symbolical of the virginity of the bearer. She offers it several times, drawing it back immediately. In the end, she keeps it, without having lost a petal from the flower. If the guest is a personage who has the power to do something for the village, the *guaris* make the request. It is customary to grant such requests, and to fulfil them, failure to do so resulting in loss of respect.

I have been unable, in limited space, to describe all the variations of these dances, and to take up some few others, less important, but interesting. But I cannot possibly omit the *sandunga*. Although limited to the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, it is very well known because of the beauty of the music and the dancers. The *Tehuanas* (women of Tehuantepec) have the well-deserved reputation of being beautiful and intelligent, and are, perhaps, the most liberated of Mexican women. They take the initiative in work, business, and love. Explorers of the origins of things have found the Tehuantepec people willing to invent several legends about the *sandunga*. A very pretty one is that it developed out of the desire of friends to console a lovelorn maiden by bringing her flowers and dancing and singing. But nobody really knows, except that the music, steps, and name are

Spanish. The dictionary translates *sandunga* as "gracefulness, elegance, winsomeness, allurement, fascination."

The music is as sensuous, romantic, and beautiful as the tropical vegetation, and the verses, sad and serious, sometimes take on a picaresque character: "Last night I knocked at your door and you did not hear. You are no good for love, you sleep too soundly." The refrain is: "*Ay, sandunga, sandunga mamá por Diós . . .*" Any number of couples may dance the *sandunga* at once, and as in other dances, the men and women face each other in rows. The women do a slow swaying waltz step with slightly lifted skirts, while the men dance before and around them in a rapid manner. At times the dancers, though dressed in their best clothes, are barefoot, but when the men wear shoes they may even perform *zapateados* to the faster measures.

The *Tehuanas* wear their everyday dress, which is most extraordinarily colorful and lovely. The skirts are long and full, with a white flounce at the bottom. The *huipil* reaches below the waist, and is embroidered either in intricate thread designs, or by hand, in flower patterns. The skirts and *huipiles* may be of different bright colors. The jewelry consists of gold earrings and long, heavy gold chains, from which dangle five, ten, and even twenty American gold-pieces. Bright ribbons adorn their hair. The men, though not unattractive in their white suits and black or colored pointed felt hats, naturally suffer by comparison.

The people of Tehuantepec no longer care for the *sandunga*, but prefer social dancing. But it is becoming

popular in Mexico City school festivals, and even on the stage, to which the *Tehuana* costume lends itself beautifully. Many things are happening to Mexico: new roads, an influx of tourists, the Government's Six-Year Plan, with socialist education and war on the clergy. All this is not propitious for the long duration of ritual dances. These which I have described, however, are likely to persist—and out of them may come something new. The School of the Dance of the Department of Education is already using themes, steps, music, and costumes taken from both secular and ritual dances, and adapting them to the stage. The first experiments have been both very Mexican and exceedingly beautiful.

## MEXICAN MUSIC

*by Carlos Chávez*

NO effort seems sufficient or final when it is aimed at understanding or interpreting the elements active in the formation of a cultural current. Mexico, an adolescent country, ought at every step to study the ways of its cultural growth, and to draw from that study those conclusions which could be most helpful to the understanding and directing of its future movements. It is necessary, furthermore, not to neglect this work of understanding and interpreting clearly the phenomena now taking place, for arbitrary interpretations which falsify or paralyze constructive efforts are never lacking. Mexican music must develop: this is a constantly expressed desire of Mexican musicians and intellectuals; but in order that this may have a real significance it is necessary to understand what Mexican music has been, and is up to the present time.

There has recently been a great number of "nationalistic" efforts and tendencies, which pretend to create and spread a music whose fundamental merit consists of the mere fact of being Mexican. Nevertheless, we do not encounter clear explanations of the reason for a desire to single out as the fundamental characteristic of art that it should have a well-defined Mexican nationality. This phenomenon is worthy of attention because, in one way

or another, it has come to determine a series of theories about Mexican art, all or almost all of them contradicting each other, which have spread confusion among the public and the Mexican artists themselves.

I think that it is preferable not to manufacture any theory; not to fix beforehand any limits to the realization of a national art. That is to say that I do not now think that art ought to be the result of a pre-conceived thesis, but that it should be just the opposite, that we should know, study, and explore the art which has existed in the country for centuries, and which still exists. This would continue the development of the art of Mexico which has been going on in many times and localities, and make our present an effective result of all of the experience of the past.

It will be seen at once that Mexican music is not an isolated phenomenon in the life of Mexico, and has not been the result of a theory, but that, on the contrary, it has been intimately related to the general political, economic, and cultural conditions which have prevailed in Mexico throughout the diverse epochs of its historical development. No method, then, will be more helpful to the understanding of Mexican music than an historic method which presents, without room for doubt, the various aspects of Mexican music on the different levels of its development.

With this criterion, it will be useful to begin to attempt an understanding of what the musical art of Mexico was before the Conquest. We will use the Aztec culture, as it

is one of the best examples of the development of an indigenous culture, and was the one which prevailed in Mexico at the time of the arrival of the Spanish.

In the life of the Aztecs music played a social role of prime importance. All the machinery of their state revolved around religion; political power was founded on religious power; the holy war, a national institution, was a method of officially dominating peoples not yet subjugated in order to make them tributaries of the great monarchy, and to obtain the prisoners of war who were indispensable to the rites of the gods.

No social phenomenon existed which was not related intimately to the religious idea: agriculture, astronomy, industries, all were unfailingly subject to the religious rite; no land-cultivation failed to originate with devotion for, and belief in, the miracle-working Tlaloc; rain, water, and land were marvelous forces which Tlaloc alone could dominate.

Even social morality was a religious morality; good and bad were determined by divine laws, that is, by the traditional laws which on some remote day the gods had revealed to the chiefs of the people.

Religion, then, was the essence and impulse of the whole life of the Aztec monarchy, and in its turn, religion could not exist without music. No religious rite could be complete, and therefore efficacious, if it was not based on a musical expression. Music is a language, a means of expression which, since the remotest times, men have used to communicate among themselves and with those beings

whom they suppose to be superior or divine. Thus, nothing more potent or efficacious than music existed as a means of influencing superior forces for men.

The monarchy supported only two great schools, that of the warriors and that of the priests. In both, the teaching of music was of prime importance. There was not a single public act, official or personal, which was not accompanied with music. This was as much true of the great festival of the god Huitzilopoztli as of the humblest ceremony of the god of the weavers, hunters, and fishermen—music had to be the element *par excellence*.

The Aztecs had both instrumental and vocal music, and their instruments were varied and numerous. The National Conservatory of Music has made a profound and careful study of pre-Cortesian instruments, which has been published in the review, *Music* and in the *Annals* of the National Museum, and which, further, has begun to be published in book-form, the first volume, dealing with percussion instruments, having been published.

Music was played, sung, and danced simultaneously, in groups of various sizes, some of which, according to chroniclers, consisted of as many as several thousand persons. Little or nothing is known of the existence of an individual music used for the expression of the personal feelings of the artists. Artistic creation, that is to say the mere composition of the musical pieces, was in the hands of the masters of music, just as the actual work of painting was done by the *tacuilos*. But no artistical musical expression, even though composed by a known individual, failed

to be the expression of collective sentiment, for it was always the people in a group who sang, played, and danced for the satisfaction of a collective social necessity.

We of the present day are able to know the musical system of the ancient Mexicans thanks to the fact that there are preserved in the National Museum various flutes of baked clay and other instruments from before the Conquest, and that these have been studied by a commission of investigation from the National Conservatory. It has been possible to prove that the sounds produced by all the flutes obey one system, and that the music of the ancient Mexicans was ruled by the natural relations of the octave, the fifth and the fourth, which the science of physics tells us are the fundamental relations of musical sounds.

It will be helpful to transcribe the description which Juan de Torquemada (1723) gives of the music and dances of the ancient Mexicans, since nothing will be likely to give with better authority a clear general idea of the development of these arts in Mexican antiquity.

“Chapter XI.—Of the manner in which these Natives had Dances; and of the great dexterity and conformity they all had, in the Dance and in the Song.

One of the principal things which they had in all this land was Songs and Dances, as much to solemnify the Fiestas of their Demons as to honor Gods whom they thought to honor in this manner and for their own joy and solace. For this reason, and because it was a thing on which they counted much, each Village, each Gentleman in his house had a Band of Musicians, with its Singers, its

composers of Dances and Songs, and these, in order to show their imagination, tried to know how to arrange Songs in their manner of Meters or Couplets. And when they were good, they were kept very busy, as the Gentlemen in their Houses on many days sang in a subdued voice. Ordinarily they sang and danced in the principal Fiestas, which took place every twenty days, and in others of less importance. The Dances of most importance were in the Plazas, other times in the house of the most important Gentleman, in his patio, for all the Gentlemen had great patios; they danced also in the houses of other Gentlemen and Leaders. When they had won some victory in War, or created a new Gentleman, or married some important Lady, or for any other occasion, the Masters composed a new Song, in addition to the usual ones which were used in the Fiestas of the Demons and of ancestral deeds. The Singers, some Days before the Fiesta, foresaw what they would have to sing. In the large Villages there were many Singers, and if there were any new songs or dances others joined them so that there would be no flaw on the day of the Fiesta. The Day they had to dance, the first thing in the morning they put a great mat in the middle of the Plaza, where the Instruments were placed, and all the musicians robed themselves in the House of the Gentleman, and came out singing and dancing. Sometimes the Dances began in the morning, and sometimes at the hour which is now that of High Mass, and at night they went around the Palace singing, and there they ended the song, and sometimes they Danced far into the night, even up to

midnight. There were two Instruments. One was high and round, thicker than a Man, about five hands high of very good wood, hollow and elaborately carved. It was painted on the outside. Over the opening of this instrument they placed the skin of a Deer which had been cured, and was stretched from the edge towards the middle. They stretched and pressed this in certain places to make the higher and lower tones. This instrument played in tune with the singers. The other Instrument was so elaborate that I cannot explain it to you without painting it. This served as a contrabass, and they both sounded well, and you could hear them from a great distance. When the Dancers arrived at the place, they put themselves in order to play the Instruments. The two best singers, as Leaders, then began the song. The large Drum was played with the hands, and this one was called a *Huehuetyl*. The other, being made differently, was played with sticks like the Instruments of Spain, and this one was called the *Teponaztli*. The Gentleman, and other Principals and Old men, went in front of the Instruments, dancing and singing. Around them another circle formed and increased the chorus. Those who moved thus in the big Villages were sometimes more than a thousand, and even sometimes more than two thousand. In addition, on the outside there was a procession of two kinds of Youths, great Dancers. The ones heading the dance were two Men alone, the best dancers, guiding the Dance. In these two circles, in the course of some turns they made, they sometimes found themselves facing members of the other circles. In other

Dances, they moved with the one next to them or behind them. There were so many of these two groups of dancers that sometimes there were almost a thousand of them, and sometimes more, depending on the Villages and the Fiestas. In ancient times, before the Wars, when they celebrated their festivals with freedom, sometimes in the large Towns three or four thousand or more joined the dance, though now the population has diminished, and very few join in the dance. Wishing to begin the dance, three or four Indians raise very shrill whistles, then the Instruments sound in a low tone, and little by little increase in volume. When the dancing People hear that the Instruments have begun, they understand from the tone the kind of song and dance, and they begin. The first Songs go slowly and in a deep tone. The first is according to the Fiesta, and is always started by the two Leaders. Then the whole Chorus takes it up jointly with the Dance. This enormous group of people keeps such perfect time as do very dexterous Dancers in Spain, and what is more the whole body, the head, arms, and hands are so much in unison that there is no discrepancy of beat. If one dancer makes a step with the right foot and then the left foot, they all do the same thing and in exactly the same way. In the same manner the Instruments, the Song, and the Dancers are all in time. There is not a discrepancy. When some very good Spanish Dancers have seen this, they have despaired. And even the ones on the outside farther away, those who keep the rhythm, and the ones who work hardest in the Dance are all in unison. Those in the middle do their part more

simply and their movements of the feet and body are more serious. And certainly they raise and lower their arms with much grace. Each Verse or Couplet is repeated three or four times, and they keep moving and pronouncing their Song so well intoned that there is no discord. When one Song is finished, seeing that the first ones seem the longest because they go most slowly, though none of them lasts more than an hour, as soon as the Instrument changes tone, when all cease the Chant and when certain intervals have been made (in the Song but not in the dance) then the Leaders begin another Chant, a little higher and more lively. In this way the Songs keep rising and the sounds keep changing, as though someone changed from a bass to a tenor voice, or from a dance to a counter-beat. There are also some Boys who follow the dancing, the Children of the principal men, usually seven or eight years old, and sometimes four or five years old. They sing and dance with the Fathers, and as the Boys sing in a very high voice or falsetto they improve the singing very much. Sometimes these play their own Trumpets and little Flutes with few tones. Others whistle with bone whistles which make a lot of noise. Others go disguised in costume and voice, travestying other Nations and their languages. Those of whom I speak are Clowns and they make themselves conspicuous, making faces and jesting, and they make those who see and hear them laugh a great deal. Some of them imitate old women, others imitate fools. Sometimes drinks are brought to the dancers. Then some go out to rest and eat, and others take their places. In this way all are able

to rest without stopping the Dance. Sometimes they bring Bunches of Roses and other Flowers or small Bouquets to carry in their hands, and Garlands which they place on their heads, in addition to the costumes they use for the dance—elaborate Mantles and plumage. Still others carry in their hands instead of Bouquets beautiful small Plumage. In these dances they wear many decorations and emblems which show which ones have been valiant in war. From the hour of vespers until night the Dances and Songs keep getting more lively and the volume gets greater all the time. The sound is more graceful, so that it seems almost like Hymns of happiness. The Instruments also increase in volume, and as there are many people dancing, it is heard far and near, especially when the Air carries the voice, and even more during the night, when everything is subdued. In order to dance at this time, they use many Lights, and certainly it is something to see."

As can be seen, this narrative of Torquemada's is a very important document, illustrating our understanding of pre-Cortesian music. We can accept, then, as well established the value and reliability of the sources of investigation of indigenous music. They consist, on one hand, of the study and understanding of pre-Cortesian instruments, and on the other, of the narrations of chroniclers. Yet the most important point remains: the indigenous music of today is a direct continuation of pre-Cortesian music. In many cases, in certain regions of Mexico, we can find that earlier music still intact. This is what confirms and gives validity to the insights we can gain by other means. Indigenous

music is a present-day reality; its esthetic and expressive value is forceful and original, and the social role it consequently plays is irreplaceable.

The animation, the force of expression, the rhythmic impetus, and, above all, the conviction with which music and dancing have been practised for many centuries by indigenous Mexicans are, beyond a doubt, qualities not excelled among other peoples of the world. An essential quality of this music is that it preserves the characteristics of magic. I mean by this that it is not a music which implores, entreats, or supplicates, in accord with a properly religious sense, but is, on the contrary, one which aims to impose itself with power and energy on superior forces. In this connection, it is to be noted that all the indigenous instruments—the drums, the *teponaxtlis*, the flutes—belong to a strong, energetic, and active music, and would never have been native to a bland and romantic type of musical expression. The expressive conditions of pre-Cortesian instruments coincide with and confirm the general moral characteristics of the race: stoicism, vigor, persistence of effort, and esthetic sensitivity.

The earliest musical revelation which I, personally, had, conditioned me toward authentically indigenous music. From as early as I can remember, from approximately the age of four years, I passed long times each year in the indigenous villages of the Valley of Tlaxcala. This district has a notable geographic peculiarity: the entire length of its small area is traversed by a river which, with the passing centuries, has been depositing mud and humus brought

from its source in the foothills of the Sierra of Puebla. It is because of this that, in the bottom of the valley, the banks of the river are fertile and propitious to the varied agriculture which constitutes the small wealth of the region. The clayey and rock-strewn hills which form the valley itself are entirely bare of fertile earth. Having no foothold for agriculture, and lacking even the elements for small industries, the natives of the villages live in undescribable misery. The almost sterile earth does support some corn and *maguey*, supplying the indispensable *tortillas* and *pulque* which explain why the race has not entirely perished in this locality. In the bottom of the Valley of Tlaxcala, where the land is good, great estates were formed, but no land-owner coveted the sterile lands of the surrounding hills. There, almost entirely without interference, the Indians live under a regime still archaic, communal, and peaceful.

In this Valley, the musicians who play the *huehuertl*, the *tlapanhuehuertl*, the *chirimía*, drum, and flute, are authentic masters, developed in pure pre-Cortesian tradition. Aside from the *chirimía*, brought by the Spaniards, no foreign instrument—no bugle, no tuba, no violin—has entered the region, and nothing, consequently, is known of “waltz-time” or “march-time.” The saint’s-day *fiestas* of these villages last a week, during which all the ceremonies, religious and profane, in the church revolve around music. This music of *huehuertl*, *chirimía*, flutes, and drums is purely traditional and indigenous: rhythmic, contrapuntal, vigorous, of astonishing vigor and conviction. Whenever

I heard this music I was gripped by its force, by its unlimited command. It has never, in later periods when I was subjected to varied influences, ceased to be for me the most important formative element.

Having arrived at a general understanding of this indigenous music, we can draw some important conclusions. The first is that it has a real value of its own, a social value which produces musical resources of high value and efficiency. The second is that it is impossible to deny, as has been attempted recently, that it has validity as a factor in the formation of Mexican culture. If its human value is undeniable, the value of its influence is beyond question.

Indigenous music is a reality both in its traditional state and in the diverse states of its evolution and transformation as *mestizo* music. Despite the fact that the Conquest consisted of the imposition of new beliefs and a new culture on the inhabitants of Mexico, it did not succeed completely in blotting out the manifestations of the ancient peoples. It is well known that the Catholic Church succeeded in transforming pagan rites into Christian rites, but that, in many cases, the transformation was imperfect, so that the rites continued to be pagan even though they were called Christian. That is the reason why, in many religious ceremonies of the Catholic Church, there can be seen to this day indigenous dances which preserve characteristics of the most remote antiquity.

These dances have in themselves a definite choreographic value, and are, for this reason also, of great interest. The indigenous dancers are not interesting because they are

Mexicans, but because they are good dancers. Each one has danced all his life, almost since his birth, and has the heritage which generation after generation has passed on for hundreds of years. It is for this reason that the dances have also been worthy of our attention, and that we have started the task of collecting them on cinematographic films.

With the Conquest, a new epoch in the life of Mexico began, and with it a new stage in Mexican music. The Conquest signifies the formation of a new race and a new society, both formed during a protracted process of development and incessant struggles. The new music of Mexico, that is, *mestizo* music, the fruit of the two races and the two cultures put into contact by the Conquest, is very rich and varied. Now we find in all sections of Mexico expressions peculiar to each locality, in which we can distinguish large or small elements of Spanish, Italian, or indigenous music.

We should, in this general historical survey, now treat this development. I will not go into great detail on this point, but I do want to note the general principals of *mestizo* art. In general, the guitar has taken a place in all the orchestras of the rural regions. It has produced many variants in form, size, tuning, and the quality of the strings, principally in the States of Jalisco and Michoacán. The reed-flute has displaced the one of clay, which is now almost never encountered. The natives of the States of Michoacán, Mexico, and Puebla principally, construct violins equal to, or resembling, those of Europe. Neverthe-

less, when we hear them in Mexican orchestras, they do not seem to remind us of their conventional style, as much because of the special materials of their construction as because of the manner of playing them and the kinds of music played. The *chirimía*, a double-reed instrument—probably introduced by the Asturians, having its origins in the Roman *gaita*, in turn a descendant of the so-called Greek flutes, also instruments of the double-reed type—was quickly adopted by the pure natives and incorporated into the rural orchestras.

It is clear that some regions have been influenced more than others by Spanish music, and also that there are districts in which there is what amounts to a complete absence of foreign influence. The east of Mexico, the Gulf coast, the Huastecan regions of Vera Cruz and Tamaulipas, have developed, among their most important musical forms, the *huapango*, a dance in six-eighth time, forcefully rhythmic as to musical accent, slow and intermittent as to dance movement. In the south, in the Isthmus region of Oaxaca, there was produced a slow, melodious, and sentimental dance called the *zandunga*, in which a marked Italian influence can be distinguished. This dance has such infinite gradations of variation that each orchestra plays it in an unique manner. The orchestras of this region are made up principally of wind-instruments of European construction—clarinets, saxhorns, saxophones, etc.—and the same can be said of them as of violins when played in Mexican orchestras. On the northwestern coast, in the States of Michoacán and Jalisco, there have developed

orchestras based mainly on stringed instruments—violins, small harps, guitars, the large guitars called *guitarrones*, and *vihuelas*—known as *mariachis*. These *mariachis* can frequently be heard in Mexico City; the Victor Company has recorded their playing.

One important form of *mestizo* music is the *corrido*, which generally relates heroic adventures or the deeds of national heroes—the corridos of the agrarian revolution of Emiliano Zapata are well known. In the *corrido*, the literary part is more important than the music. In general, there is only one musical phrase, repeated in all the verses. The *corrido*, nevertheless, contains the germ of an epic musical sense, a fact worthy of note now that, as is natural among a people which has been oppressed and weakened, it is very common to find in popular music sentimental and feeble forms of expression. I personally believe that from the *corrido* there ought to come an intellectualized musical form of great importance to Mexican music.

The *mestizo* music which I have mentioned, and the musical instruments belonging to it, are easily within reach of all; but indigenous music and its corresponding instruments are not found in the large cities of Mexico, and do not form a part of the aggregate of activities in the fine arts stimulated by modern Mexican life. The Conquest interrupted the indigenous musical traditions because they were directly connected with a religious cult which the *conquistador* exterminated. The result was that in the foci of Spanish civilization, the large cities, even the idea that an indigenous music existed was lost. In the country

regions, the phenomena were various: the natives did not drop their customs to equal extents in all parts of the country. Thus, the degree to which the *conquistador* exercised his influence in each region determined the exact degree of transformation and admixture in the customs and artistic and religious expressions of the natives. Thus in many cases the missionaries, even with the desire to impose the Catholic religion, used the indigenous forms of expression—song, theater, dance—injecting a distinct content into them. The study of the degree and manner in which this transformation of indigenous art by European influence has operated in each region during the 400 years of contact is one of the most interesting studies remaining to be made.

For many years one of the many problems which disturbed us in relation to the development of a musical culture in Mexico was that of being able to supply the means needed to give the correct form to a musical expression unobtainable with the exclusively European instrumental resources at hand in the City. That is to say that, from the time we were children, we were saturated with Mexican music, with the music of the country regions, the regions which preserve, only slightly altered, their pre-Colonial traditions, and that we should like to express ourselves musically in those terms. The choir of *huehuetl*, flute, and *teponaxtli*; a thousand varieties of timbrels, rattles, and drums, which in each region and among each tribe have produced variants of extraordinary richness; the *mestizo* orchestra—*mariachis*, *huapangeros*, etc.—sup-

plied other cases of authentic musical wealth remaining spread throughout the country, but tending to disappear, displaced by the cheap sentimental music coming from the exterior. This music of the country regions interested us because it is Mexican, that is to say, because it is organically identified with our temperament and racial conditioning, but even more because it has force of expression as music.

Our problem, then, consisted of making a reconcentration of instruments, of means of expression, which corresponded to our musical feeling. The piano, the classical symphony orchestra, even with their great instrumental richness, were not enough to give life to a musical expression born of other instruments and other acoustical elements. We had an obligation to bring together all the Mexican instruments of authentic musical value. But it was not until 1931 that, through our activity, the National Conservatory, and later the Music Section of the Department of Fine Arts of the Department of Public Education obtained the instruments to form the Mexican Orchestra, which came to be a new and fruitful resource for Mexican composers. The Mexican Orchestra brings together the greater part of the European elements which the *conquistador* implanted, and of the instruments of the ancient Mexicans. For example, the guitar and all the similar instruments of Arabian origin brought to Mexico by the Spanish are now instruments completely identified with the Mexican character. Even the brass instruments, typical products of occidental culture, inevitably asso-

ciated with French or German music, have filtered into the bands and little native orchestras of the ranches, villages, and haciendas, acquiring a new personality in Mexico. It depends indisputably on the manner of playing them, but such a thing in turn is nothing but the result of a factor characteristic of the new race. We have already spoken of the purely native instruments, which have a really extraordinary musical value.

This Orchestra must be judged with the widest criterion, as it does not attempt an archaeological reconstruction of pre-Cortesian instrumental groups; we have called it the Mexican Orchestra, but we neither intend nor desire to limit it with a narrow nationalist or regionalist criterion. The hope in founding the Mexican Orchestra is not to limit musical expressions, nor to be satisfied with obtaining an expression of "local color." Exactly the contrary; our desire is to amplify and enrich musical resources. Furthermore, the first efforts with the Mexican Orchestra have taught us that instruments of European construction fit into the general group if given special treatment; the same instrument, say a transverse flute, can give forth the suave and sensuous atmosphere of *The Afternoon of a Faun* and the precise and convincing accent of our strongly rhythmic American music. The presence of the "new" instruments gives such force to the ensemble that the other instruments are completely transformed. We believe that the Mexican Orchestra is a useful vehicle for the musical culture of Mexico, but we want to insist that the

index of its usefulness and benefit must not be made to depend on the degree of "Mexicanism" it is able to achieve, but the degree of interest it is able to attain among the modern expressions of universal culture.

## THE FIESTA AS A WORK OF ART

by *Rene d'Harnoncourt*

IN Mexico one has an unparalleled opportunity to study an art that is dying out rapidly throughout the rest of the world, but still blossoms vigorously there. The Mexican *fiesta* must be considered a veritable art-form, and though it cannot be claimed that Mexico is the only country where this is true, the *fiesta* there has a social, economic, and spiritual significance which places it in a category by itself. European festivals—that at Seville on Good Friday, for instance—are obviously deteriorating, and such festivals as still exist in the United States have completely lost their folk character and become either affairs of mere fashion, as at New Orleans, or advertising stunts, as at Winchester, Virginia. In Mexico they are an integral and important part of the life of the people.

The Mexican *fiesta*, a work of art in itself, is made possible only through the cooperation of the other arts, each of which has a natural and organic place in the whole. Music is as important as the visual arts and the art of speech. An excellent demonstration of this is the *fiesta* held annually at Huejotzingo, on the highroad between Puebla and Mexico City.

It is supposed to take place on the last day before Lent, but in actuality may happen a day sooner or later, accord-

ing to the whim of the people. The first morning I was in Huejotzingo I thought that the carnival was going to start, when several people came out of their houses in costume, each with a small band of musicians. They walked around for a while; the musicians played a little. But it didn't catch on, and so—after an hour or so—the musicians went home, the costumes disappeared. The *fiesta* was off. Three days later it really happened. At first there was just one musician wandering idly about. Then another appeared, and soon there were five. Near one of the stands in the market I saw an Apache, magnificent in a headdress of waving feathers, a feather-skirt, and a shield of shiny mirror. With him there was a group of devils, and under the trees at the side of the *plaza* were brilliant and splendid soldiers. Interest began to quicken; more and more people left their ordinary occupations to slip indoors. After a few minutes they emerged in full finery, and within an hour or so the carnival was in full swing.

The wide expanse of the *plaza* at Huejotzingo was soon full of costumes of every conceivable color, all of infinitely curious origin. Among the crowd I could distinguish the ones who were to be the leading characters in the drama to be enacted—the General, the Bandit, and the Bride. Soon these three were together, and a little group of followers had fallen into line behind them. This line gradually lengthened, until the whole crowd, which had been aimlessly milling about, had become a procession marching around the *plaza*. It seemed that marching drew similar costumes together, for soon all the soldiers were

in one group, all the Apaches and all the musicians in others. The procession gathered speed, and was soon sweeping around grandly, while the excitement increased every minute.

The procession itself was, for a while, sufficient amusement for everyone. Eventually, however, the need for some concrete action was felt, and just then the General and the Bride disappeared into the Town Hall. After a few minutes they came out onto the balcony, beneath which were the Bandit, on horseback, with his followers, the crowd spread out around them. The Bandit took a letter from his pocket, and, after several unsuccessful efforts, succeeded in throwing it up into the waiting hands of the Bride. Having read it, she promptly climbed over the railing and leaped gracefully into the saddle of a waiting horse, her highly masculine trousers showing from beneath her dress. (I might add here that the Bride's name was Juan, and that her veil hid a drooping mustache.) In a second the crowd had cleared a path, and the Bandit and the Bride dashed off down the street, pursued almost at once by the angry General and his soldiers.

The chase went merrily, up and down the streets, around the *plaza*, in and out between houses, with a great deal of shouting and shooting, for blank cartridges fired just under the bellies of the horses increased the general commotion. Pandemonium broke out, and the noise was terrific. The concentrated, piled-up energies of a year were squandered on one great outburst, until everybody was ex-

hausted and gradually, of its own accord, it began to die down.

Then, almost for the first time, I noticed the only preparation that had been made in advance—a small hut in one end of the *plaza*. Around this the people were beginning to cluster, in anticipation of the last act in the drama. Soon the Bandit, the Bride, and the General appeared in front of the hut. With gestures of farewell they stepped inside. A few shots were fired, and a moment later flames broke out in the thatch of the roof. When the front of the hut was in a blaze, the General, the Bandit, and the Bride appeared beneath its fury. In one last salvo of fire-crackers and one last burst of music, the carnival reached its climax. The people lingered, watching the bonfire until the hut was gone completely, and then they straggled home, one by one. The *fiesta* was over.

I asked a good friend of mine, Dona María, what legend the *fiesta* celebrated. What she told me I faithfully record. A long time ago there was a Spanish general who was very important in his own country. He came to Mexico and married an Indian girl. They had two children, a boy and a girl, and they were very happy until the Spanish authorities passed a law forbidding marriages between Spaniards and Indians, requiring all Spaniards to put aside their Indian wives, and specifying that the sons of such marriages should stay with their father, the daughters with their mother. Then the general was very miserable. But he left his wife—since it was the only thing he could do, and went back with his son to Spain. In Mexico the years

went on, and the little girl was brought up by the nuns. In Spain, the general entered politics and—being very busy—naturally neglected the education of his son, who therefore became a bandit. One day the bandit rode by the convent (Dona María failed to explain how he returned to Mexico) and looking up at the balcony, saw the girl, who was very lovely. He fell in love with her immediately, and consequently threw a letter up to her. Never having seen a love-letter before, she was naturally overcome with passion, and—without thinking twice—jumped down from the balcony and rode away with him. In the meantime the general (who also seems to have returned from Spain in a mysterious way) had been sent out by the government to capture the bandit, who had become famous, and was considered a menace. The general arrived soon after the elopement, and of course pursued the young couple into the hills, where they had gone in search of a priest to marry them.

The priest had been found, and they were just about to be married, when the general arrived and attacked the bandit. The girl flew to her lover's rescue, and in the shuffle a locket fell out of her dress. In it was a picture of her mother, and so the general realized that she was his daughter. Then, in some unexplained manner, he also realized that the bandit was his son. Thereupon, of course, he did not want to kill him, but had to reveal to both his children that they could not be married. The boy and girl were probably somewhat glad and somewhat sorry. About their immediate emotions the legend does not in-

form us. It merely adds that they were all very happy afterwards and, as Dona María said, "It's a fine legend for our *fiesta*."

It is at once obvious that, though the story provides a point of departure for the *fiesta*, no effort has been made to re-enact it literally. The *fiesta* makes its own demands. It requires a procession, so a procession is introduced; it requires a dramatic ending, and, since the denouement of the story is extremely casual, one is invented. The first part of the legend is not particularly valuable for the development of the *fiesta* scheme, and is therefore eliminated. What originated as a narrative, or literary, form, is translated into one which might be said to be musical. The slow introduction, the gathering of interest, reminds one of the stringing and tuning of instruments before a concert; the overture gradually takes form in the procession, and rises into a sustained *crescendo*, which is at last broken by a dramatic incident. The furious evolution of the theme, supported by the whole orchestra, dies down of itself eventually, and is followed by the apotheosis.

It should be mentioned that, though the form taken by the *fiesta* is perfectly organic, it is by no means unconscious. The chief actors in the drama are elected, and for months in advance of the *fiesta* every participant knows what part he will play. However, when it actually occurs, it is entirely spontaneous, and follows a development that has grown from within itself. This concentration upon the *fiesta* as a living thing with its own unique significance is illustrated in the costumes, which combine amazingly in-

congruous things that under ordinary circumstances would not be found together. Their everyday meanings have temporarily been forgotten; they are used only for the qualities which serve the purpose of the carnival. For example, a man whose shoulders are draped in a much-venerated ceremonial cape borrowed from the church will wear across his chest a brilliant red poster—"CONDENSED MILK." The usual association of ideas connected with it does not trouble him; he has thought only of the color.

One of the most colorful groups is the Zacapoaxtlas, who represent an Indian tribe famous for its bravery in the war against the French. A "Zacapoaxtla's" garb consists of a Texas *sombrero* decorated with streamers in the Mexican national colors, a mask with black side-whiskers, gold spectacles, and a black tunic cut in the style of the ones worn by baroque archangels. Beneath it appear a pair of his wife's panties, black socks embroidered with daisies, and gold sandals. He may add to this symphony a cape of gaily colored brocade. Analyzed, this costume appears a little odd and certainly untrue to life, but it creates exactly the desired impression of fierceness and wildness for which the Zacapoaxtlas have been renowned.

The Huejotzingo *fiesta* is unusual in that it is almost entirely *l'art pour l'art*, a *fiesta* for the sake of the *fiesta* alone. Some of its sources can be traced to historical happenings, it is true, but they are altogether unrelated and are not treated literally. The Bandit derives from Agustín Lorenzo, a famous popular hero, and the costumes are reminiscent both of the uniforms of French soldiers who

marched through Huejotzingo during the reign of Maximilian and of the soldiers who took part in the wars between Huejotzingo and Tlaxcala before Cortés. These uniforms have, as might be expected, suffered a change. There was added, for example, to a tunic and trousers showing unmistakable French leanings and a grenadier's hat in the shape of a busby, a most unmilitaristic long pink apron not to be found in any army that ever appeared on the globe.

Ninety per cent of Mexico's *fiestas* are not such independent entities; they have mostly kept their ceremonial character, even if the execution be influenced by pure joy in the pleasure they give. At the opposite pole from Huejotzingo is the Feast of All Souls, a festival in which the dead are invited to participate, which is strictly ceremonial and serious in intention. I was staying in Huejotzingo as the second of November drew near, and the villagers told me to go to San Miguel Tiancizolco, a village only twenty minutes on foot from the Mexico City-Puebla highway. It lies on a hillside, and beneath it the land flattens out into an enormous wide valley ending at the volcanoes.

There, at about five o'clock in the afternoon, the *ancianos* (old men) of the village assemble in the church-yard, which has been decorated with the vivid yellow *zempaxochil* (marigold), the flower of death since the time of the Aztecs. Festoons of this flower hang from the walls; there are designs in them on the graves, some in the form of the cross, some in shapes used since before

the Conquest. Thin streamers of tissue paper float from the bell-tower, against the clear emptiness of the sky. It is very quiet, and the voices of the men echo faintly.

Shortly after five o'clock the church bell starts to ring, but then stops. There is a moment's pause before, in the next village, a church bell answers. Then another, farther away, and another, then our church again, until the air vibrates with sound. For twenty minutes the ringing fills the whole valley. Then, suddenly, it is over, and there is pervasive, complete silence. In the late afternoon light the trousers of the men are intensely white, the flowers as intensely yellow. The silence is broken at last by the deep, rapid beating of the *huehuetl*, an Indian drum, which is taken up by the next village and then the others. The rhythm reverberates from the slopes of the volcanoes and seems to dominate one's breathing and one's blood. When it stops, all sound is wrung out of the world, and in the incredible silence the men start slowly to walk the path of death—*el camino de los muertos*.

From the churchyard a little path has been made of the petals of the marigold. It runs through the village, and joins the houses in which someone has died during the year, and the men's feet follow it noiselessly until the first house is reached. They are received by the nearest relative of the deceased, who, in traditional phraseology, asks the reason for their visit. The leader of the procession, a very old man, replies to the question by holding out two *centavos* and saying: "This is to show that we come as friends to visit *el muertito* (the little dead one)." The host

answers: "Come in—you are welcome." They enter the hut, which is one room, a long room with clay walls and peaked roofs, pictures of saints on the walls, and decorations of marigolds. In the middle of the floor is the table with the *ofrenda* (offering), an enormous bowl with *mole de guajalote* (turkey with spiced sauce), a brown earthenware jar, and a small mountain of loaves of bread with one candle lying across them. On both sides of the *ofrenda* tall yellow candles burn, set in black, glazed candlesticks. In front of the large table is a smaller, lower one, with more candles and a small *ofrenda*. On the floor is a black, glazed incense-burner. Two chairs are drawn up to right and left of the *ofrenda*, and on them are piled the gifts of the family to *el muertito*—the things he liked best, a sombrero perhaps, a deck of cards, a bottle of *mescal*.

The old men approach the *ofrenda*, holding their hats shyly in their hands in the Indian gesture that is like a permanent bow. The oldest, his hat in one hand, stretches out the other hand toward the offering, and says: "How are you, little dead one? I have not seen you since the sixteenth of May, when you were buying beans in the market. You remember that I saw you crossing over from the Pharmacy of the Child Jesus to the vegetable stands? You called to me, 'Are your crops all right?' And you told me that your cousin Rosita had a fine baby." It may be that he will talk to *el muertito* of their last three or four meetings, or of any incidents they both knew. Then, after a short silence, he turns to the others and says: "The little dead one bids you welcome, and bids you to sit down

and feast." The bowl is moved from the big table to the small one, as is some of the bread, and they all eat, the little *ofrenda* being set apart for the one who is dead. When the *ancianos* have finished, they rise and bid farewell, and follow the path of marigold petals to the house of the next host.

If a spectator can free himself from the spell of what seems completely unreal and un-everyday, he will find on analysis that there is nothing in either the words or the actions which does not belong to the everyday world. It is very simple; there is no strained pathos. It is, in fact, an inspired dramatic performance, in which the effect is produced by the complete absence of theatrical elements. It is not symbolic of the thing, but the thing itself.

Between these two extremes there are *fiestas* in hundreds of villages each year which contain the elements exemplified in these two. The Feather Dance, held in the neighborhood of Oaxaca, is a dramatization of the Conquest, the participants a group of Spaniards headed by Cortés and a group of Indians headed by Moctezuma. With Moctezuma there are, as the Dance begins, two girls, one called *Reina Xochil* and the other Malinche. The *fiesta* consists of dialogues between the Aztecs and the Spaniards, interrupted by dances of the two groups. The first sign of the coming tragedy is given, in the dance, when Malinche moves from the side of Moctezuma to that of Cortés, a gesture symbolizing the very tragic historical fact that this Indian girl, who interpreted for Cortés, informing him of the customs and habits of the Aztecs, had

an important part in bringing about the downfall of the empire of Moctezuma. This *fiesta* has, then, its origin in a drama of tremendous importance to the actors. The complete absence of realistic approach to this serious material is indicated, however, by the fact that, for some reason unknown to me, both women are represented by girls between four and six years of age, and most of the Spaniards by boys from ten to fifteen. Another not strictly literal touch is that the uniform of the Spaniards resembles closely an admiral's uniform of the Victorian era. The effect of this festival is made by the magnificent costumes of the Indian dancers, feather headdresses some three feet high which emphasize every long, swinging movement of the dance.

An especially good example of the *fiesta* spirit growing out of ritual, but completely overshadowing it, is the festival of the Virgin of Guadalupe on each twelfth of December. From all over Mexico thousands of people, the humblest Indians and the most substantial and sophisticated city-dwellers, come to the sanctuary of the Virgin in and around the basilica just outside Mexico City. Some of the Indians journey for weeks on foot; some of the Mexico City people come in Buicks. The latter contribute their merry-go-rounds and their trick photographers; the Indian his dancers and the music of his guitar, made of the shell of the armadillo. The casual visitor can easily remain unaware of the religious framework—the Catholic ritual of the day dedicated to the Virgin—which unites the whole and gives it a significance common to all. If he sees only

the firecrackers and the paper flags, he will be apt to dismiss the whole *fiesta* as a Mexican version of Coney Island.

There is one other *fiesta* which I want to mention because of its tremendous power as an emotional expression. This is the Deer Dance of the Yaquis. It is unique because, despite being held on Mexican territory and therefore being literally Mexican, it belongs to one of the few tribes that for more than 400 years have withstood the spiritual amalgamation of Indian and white which has produced the fusion civilization we are accustomed to think of as Mexico. Also, the Yaquis are closely related to the Apaches of New Mexico, and belong culturally to the American Southwest, rather than to Mexico proper. Their *fiesta* is important, however, because through it we are able to gain some conception of at least one aspect of American art as it existed before the Conquest. The Yaqui makes a *fiesta* only if stirred to great emotion. A Yaqui soldier once told me that their *fiestas* are held for only two purposes: to mourn a chief and to celebrate a victory. The Yaqui's only participation in the life of modern Mexico is his service in the army. I have never seen the Deer Dance performed in the Yaqui's own country, but I have watched a Yaqui regiment do it both in their city quarters and while campaigning in the interior.

In the desert, a low tent is pitched, creating a wide, low strip of intense darkness in the glare of the sun. Hundreds of stone-faced Yaqui soldiers stand about, motionless. The musical accompaniment is the strong, enervating rhythm of the Yaqui drum—a gourd swimming in water

—and the shrill whistling of a flute. There are two dancers, naked except for blankets fastened around their waists and the strings of dried cocoons wrapped around the calves of their legs and rattled to emphasize their movements. The Hunter Dancer wears a black mask, the Deer Dancer a little stuffed deerhead strapped to his forehead. The Hunter Dancer has two sticks to tap, the Deer Dancer two gourds to rattle. The movements are very rapid, *staccato*, with muscles at very high tension. There are quick turns and lightning jumps, sudden but controlled. So far as I know, no legend or story is symbolized in this dance. If there ever was one, it has long since disappeared. The Deer Dance today is a pure expression of emotion. It lasts until the dancers break down—sometimes only after days. As it proceeds, the ecstasy of the onlookers increases, mounts, until its rigid control chokes you with tenseness. One who watched it for five minutes might easily be bored. One who has watched it for hours is prepared for suicide, for murder, for anything.

Of all the arts of Mexico, the *fiesta* is most important as a way of understanding the country and its people. There is great need for that wider study of it which would be a real contribution to the existing knowledge both of Mexico and of art.

## PLASTIC ART

### IN PRE-CONQUEST MEXICO

*by Diego Rivera*

THE subject of pre-Conquest Mexican plastic is an extremely interesting one, almost too interesting to me. There is, however, the unfortunate circumstance that this theme should be approached visually. It is difficult to discuss it without looking at it. It would be far better for me to meet you in the patio of the National Museum or at Teotihuacán, or in any other spot where examples of pre-Cortesian plastic art may be seen.

Perhaps you know this art as well as I do. For there is part of it of which we can no longer do more than talk. About fifteen years ago I saw, at Chichen-Itzá in Yucatán, the last frescos which remained from the marvellous Maya epoch. They were in the so-called Ball-Court. Those paintings had endured probably more than a thousand years in a state of fair conservation. But fifteen years of care by a Department of the Preservation of Buildings has sufficed to make them disappear. They had withstood with success an attack with dynamite by Mr. Thomson, who opened the ruins to take photographs. There was insufficient light, so he dynamited the roof. But it was not until persons charged with conserving the frescos arrived that they disappeared. At last, when some friends of mine went there to photograph the frescos for

publication in a book, they found the slabs crammed up against the wall. It seemed to them that the preservation of the stones was more important to the Department of the Preservation of Buildings than the frescos.

Since the arrival here of the Spaniards, Mexican plastic art has had to fight for its existence against those who represent the Spanish element, those whom we now call the middle class, the lawyers, doctors, and others who live on the labor of workers. The Spaniards who colonized Mexico did not bring it the highest type of their country's culture, for Spain at that time was occupied with the expulsion of Moors, Arabs, and Jews. The invaders were really civilized persons only if they were Jews who had to hide their culture. If they were Spaniards, they belonged to the group with the lowest culture. Those of us who have been in Spain know that the Spanish peasants are, even today, very close to living on the Neolithic level. Naturally the majority of the soldiers who came with the *conquistadores* belong to that caste. The great men among them, such leaders as Cortés and Bernal Díaz del Castillo, constituted a tiny minority directing a mob.

One of the most interesting remnants of pre-Conquest plastic is the Dresden Codex. This Codex has recently been deciphered by some Berlin scientists, and found to be an astronomical work embracing periods of eleven thousand years before, and eleven thousand years after, the Conquest. The present-day astronomers have discovered only two errors in its calculations. That constitutes a mathematical demonstration of the mental development of

the race destroyed by the barbarous *conquistadores*. Being a remnant of the period of European feudalism, they did not have sufficient knowledge to estimate the value of the sciences of those they conquered. That fact is the cause of the vicissitudes through which our plastic arts have passed since the Conquest.

The ancient plastic Mexican art was by no means without social significance. One of the proofs of this is the name by which the chiefs were called—"That one amongst us who best understands culture." This fact proves that the plastic arts were part of the life of society. There was little development of life along technical lines because every energy was concentrated on intellectual interests and the arts.

The multiplicity of languages made necessary the creation of a written language intelligible to all. This resulted, as it did in China, in the development of an image-writing. All these factors explain the high development of the plastic arts in Mexico. It is a country where natural forms are strong and clearly defined, where colors are pure and the atmosphere clear. In the Valley of Mexico, for example, can be seen mountains of volcanic origin. Between those mountains and the Pyramids of Teotihuacán there is no difference of essential form, but merely one of exactness. And, what is more, the forms at Teotihuacán, the Pyramids built by men, bear—like all good sculpture—a relation to the universe. This is not a mere figure of speech. All the ancient Mexican monuments were built in relation to astronomical positions. Every dimension of the Pyra-

mids of Teotihuacán, the position of each of their angles, is in correct relation to solar and lunar movements. The role which the planet Venus had in the design of the Pyramids was enormous, though little studied up to now. In sculpture and in painting there was exactly the same phenomenon. They were merely an integral part of architecture.

European plastic, sculpture in particular, is fundamentally sensual and sentimental. Mexican sculpture is cerebral, sensitive, and sensual, but never sentimental. It is for that reason that the ancient Mexican is the most forceful of all sculptures. It should be known, not as Mexican, but as American. It is the product of this continent and its heterogeneous populations, and therein lies its greatest importance to us.

In the National Museum is an example of Mexican sculpture which we know as the Goddess of Death because that is what the ticket affixed to it says. If we compare this statue with the press used in Detroit to make the front fenders of automobiles, we discover an extraordinary proportional relationship between them. It is there because there is, in the production of a work of art a coefficient which is not intentional, a factor closer to the earth than to the brain of the artist. In both of the cases mentioned the work of art was both necessary and useful.

In the ancient American world, the lack of advanced technique meant that production had to be carried on under the dictates, under the pressure, under the command of a work of art. Exactly this is still the case today.

The difference is that, following industrialization, the contemporary work of art produces objects. In the ancient world it produced ideas which in turn made the slaves produce objects, whereas today it produces them directly.

It is in this sense that the contemporary American world contains the possibility of a liberation of humanity. The artist of the pre-Conquest world was anonymous. Nobody knows who created the marvels which we can still see to this day. This does not indicate modesty, which was not a characteristic of the Aztecs. The Aztecs did not possess the gentle virtues. It is merely that the artists of that epoch were functional.

This is equally true today of the engineers of the United States. In reality, the present-day engineers of the United States are marvelous artists. The genius of the land has a place in their creations. Today their works of art are useful.

The difference in the demand for one series of machines and another, equally useful, can be explained only by the factor of beauty. Machinery in general cannot help being beautiful, because beauty grows out of a harmonious relationship between a whole and its parts, and out of the balanced functioning of the parts among themselves.

This is not an esthetic definition. It is the esthetic statement of a fact. Take for an example a human being or a plant which we consider beautiful, and you will discover that these indications of harmony always exist in it. The sensation of beauty can rise from thousands of different causes. We can find beauty in a woman from China, Nor-

way, or Mexico. They are all entirely different, but each has beauty if the type unites the conditions of harmony. Thus we consider both a piece of negro sculpture from Africa and the Discobolus beautiful.

Of course, a machine which did not fulfil these requirements would not be a work of art. That is why a good machine is beautiful by nature. It is because of the identical characteristics that a fine ancient Mexican sculpture always resembles a machine and that we can draw from monumental sculpture relations easy to conceive. I can site a manifestation which, to my personal taste, is perhaps the most marvellous of the pre-Conquest sculpture. I refer to the Tarascan sculpture in clay.

This art was not at all formal or stiff. It was an intimate technique, within which the artist always worked like a mechanic. When he made an arm he was making much more than the exterior form of the arm. Sometimes the arm was very thin, sometimes as thick as the waist. The feet are sometimes as small as the mouth, and sometimes large enough to form a real base for the statue. Each part is functional, as in a machine. That is the signal characteristic of American plastic, of the pre-Cortesian plastic. There are millions of these marvelous artifacts of clay, objects of singular beauty, which were just one thing—money. In the markets of ancient Mexico things were worth one man, half a man, a foot, a double man. Thus they counted. There are thousands and thousands of sculptural fragments which were fragments when they were made. In that way the work of art was placed on the

essential basis of utility and was as useful as a dollar. Thus was it possible to direct society by means of works of art.

This explains why in the United States today there is a bank—The Bank for Savings—which has exactly the same form as the Cathedral of Sancta Sofia in Constantinople. A bank must give its clients, even though only by means of exterior form, that feeling of security in the future which is a sensation the possession of the bank's securities cannot give. In the same way the ancient Mexican works of art gave the people confidence in the men who exploited them. They inspired fear of the gods who asked human sacrifices. They played, that is to say, the same rôle as the Christs and Virgins brought by the Spaniards. The Aztec gods demanded the surgical extraction of the heart; the Christ demanded the burning of heretics in the furnaces of the Inquisition. There still exist some more or less fantastic accounts of the pre-Conquest period. There is said to have been a *fiesta* of one day during which 20,000 victims were sacrificed. It is said that the Holy Inquisition accounted for 350,000.

Both before and after the Conquest the work of art served, as always, as an instrument of power. When a work of art is not that, then it is mechanically and fatally the opposite, and it becomes useful to those who fight against the exploiters and oppressors. It cannot be a neutral thing, save as morphine, alcohol or cocaine are neutral. When a work of art does not have as a result an action either to the right or to the left, it can result only

in inaction and absolute stagnation. Then it is said to be full of repose, and is extraordinarily useful to the classes in power. There can be nothing more useful to those in power than the inaction of those who are not.

Thus it is in the stage of civilization called bourgeois, thus far the stage of greatest development, that there appears a thing called pure art. This aspect of the work of art is nothing but an application of the political technique of that precursor of modern politics, Machiavelli. The intelligent among the bourgeoisie have understood that it is much better to paralyze than to have to convince. When people who have worked ten years to save \$2,000 lose it in a bank-failure, it is impossible to convince them that the bank is secure. It is much easier to make them forget their loss by means of movies which end in marriage and a kiss, music which makes them dance, or works of art, pictures which represent nothing, the deciphering of which will endlessly amuse people who cannot be convinced that they represent nothing.

That is now the destiny of the work of art. Yet we cannot complain, for otherwise it would have no connection with life and consequently would not be a work of art at all.

This explains why, when mural painting began to come to life in the United States it started a conflict between the classes in power and those not in power. It was an announcement of inevitable forthcoming events, a realization of the great part which the United States will take in the development of civilization. Until three years ago

fresco and mural painting in the United States were in the hands of academic painters who placed their works where they could not be seen—a scheme which even now seems excellent to architects in Mexico and other parts of the world, and above all to those architects whose buildings would become invisible if they were adorned with real works of art.

Today there are more than 800 mural and fresco painters working in the United States, the majority of them highly interesting and many of them marvelous. The government employs more than three thousand painters. Why? Because social problems have made painting necessary and useful. Thus a social movement helps inevitably to advance the cause of plastic in the United States. That country can even now produce three times as much goods as it needs. As a consequence a time will come when the workers there will have to work less to produce necessities, and will have more hours to devote to the production of things to please themselves.

We have already seen that, despite many obstacles, the United States has drawn closer in world affairs to the Soviet Union. The need for exchanging products was one cause; the menace of the reactionary, oppressive policies of Japan another. Japan represents the possibility of neo-feudalism, a condition already imposed on 40,000,000 men. The things to be seen in the Germany of Hitler can, due to Japan, be multiplied indefinitely.

This situation merely means that despite circumstances which apparently cause the United States to move more

and more to the right, it will, through the force of history, in the near future—perhaps next month—be forced into collaboration with the one factor which represents, with its own industrial power, the possibility of a better humanity. Today we are really living in pre-history. But when this co-operation takes place there will surely begin, on American territory, the production in large numbers of marvelous works of art.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES TODAY

*by Herbert J. Spinden*

IN Central Mexico, on the cool highlands, with all nature fresh, green, and sparkling in the summertime, the very centuries seem to flow under your feet as you go from one archaeological site to the next and note the changing arts of civilization after civilization. The little heads and figures of clay made by America's pioneer farmers strike you first: they are picked up on bare hilltops, on village sites along the ancient shores of Lake Texcoco, in the gravel deposits of old streams, and even under lava beds where tunnels have been dug. Next, there are great cities lying in ruins, platforms and pyramids, steep stairways leading up to temples, serpents and staring faces carved in stone. These are a natural consequence, though far removed in time, of the invention of agriculture in America. The people slowly multiplied and came to group themselves in urban centers, so that when the Spanish adventurers came to the land of Moctezuma in 1519, they found cities and gold, ethics, religion, and government. And now one sees in Mexico the recrudescence of old ideals, arts and humanities rooted deep in the soil and in the blood of the people for many centuries.

Visiting Mexico, you see these things with your own eyes, and form your own judgment upon historical and

social matters of prime importance. Nor, to an imaginative mind, are the present interests of North America completely separated from those achievements in civilization which make ancient Mexico and Central America a favorite field of study for the archaeologist and the historian of first causes. If we can say to England, speaking of immaterial benefits received:

“We too are heirs of Runnymede,  
Of Shakespeare’s fame and Cromwell’s deed”,

if we can extol as parts of our cultural heritage:

“Then glory that was Greece  
And the grandeur that was Rome”,

then we can say to Mexico, thinking of material and homely things which enter into our everyday lives: “We acknowledge a debt of gratitude to the Red Man who preceded us in the New World, and who won from nature by patient industry these highly domesticated plants which give us an economic place in the sun, and we express our desire to learn more about the ethical, religious, and governmental forces, the social disciplines and leaderships which raised structures of illusion and beauty in ancient America.” That would be a credo in keeping with our true obligations, and with a sympathetic understanding of the true character of a neighboring nation separated from us by the passable barriers of language and culture.

And yet it is my firm conviction that Americans of a certain not-too-numerous class are not equipped to enjoy themselves in Mexico, and that their presence on any expedition or excursion is unfortunate for both themselves and their fellows. I refer precisely to those slaves of comfort and of the conveniences of our machine civilization who cannot take any of the crudities of raw nature on the chin, who, like the princess in the fairy tale, cannot sleep with three peas under seven mattresses, who, wishing to study antiquities in their real setting, are nevertheless in rebellion if any of the usages of our own recent past prove to be contemporary in parts of Mexico they wish to visit. Unfortunately, the physical inadaptability of such persons is generally psychological as well, and while there are some hotels in Mexico sufficiently sybaritic to cater to those to whom comfort comes first, it is often true that accommodations are faulty in small towns and along roads to archaeological sites. There is always a last distance to be traveled on one's own legs, a final demand on an uncomplaining disposition, if pleasure and intellectual profit are to be had for all.

Actually, the highlands of Mexico are open country, and no harsh demands are made on endurance by visits to Xochicalco or Monte Alban—that is, nothing like the tests which come if one goes across the rocky Puk in Yucatán by car, up the Usumacinta by boat, or by mule train over the uninhabited and heavily forested plains of Petén to visit some of the ancient Maya cities. These are practically inaccessible during the rainy season, for in the

lowlands the rains are heavy and continuous, while on the highlands they merely serve to revive trees and flowers and to make the air cool and crystal-clear.

But granted that you are sufficiently sturdy and sportsmanlike, what can you see and learn of archaeology during, say, a brief summer visit to Mexico? Several cities are bases from which excursions by automobile can be arranged. You land, let us say, at Vera Cruz, and spend the first night at Orizaba, half way up to the plateau. There is time, the next morning, to visit the Stone of the Giant, located in a picturesque cemetery a mile or two from the center of the city. It is a boulder bearing a gigantic figure of a man on its upper surface, and has dates in the Aztec style. In an extra day it is possible to visit Maltrata, where there is another carved boulder and an almost entirely Indian population.

Cuernavaca can be reached by a two-hour ride in an automobile from Mexico City. Its environs contain ruins of great interest, and even within the limits of the city itself deposits of Archaic figurines have been excavated—in a locality called Gualupita. They belong, perhaps to a rather late stage of the long Archaic Period. No surface ruins are ordinarily noted in ground containing Archaic figurines, but there are sometimes footings of old adobe walls, and occasionally evidences of burials. The classification of the simple, but often strikingly realistic, heads and entire figures belonging to this art of the first agriculturalists is a fascinating pursuit. Presumably the beginnings of the Archaic Period must be placed long before

the time of Christ, and its end—in this part of Mexico—several centuries later. Earlier remains than those of Cuernavaca are found at a number of village-sites along the shores of the now-drained Lake Texcoco near Mexico City, to which I shall refer later.

The Toltec level in Mexican history is one of great cities more or less inspired by the Maya cities of the lowlands. Near Cuernavaca this epoch is marked by Xochicalco, a massive hilltop ruin reached by an hour's ride and a half-hour of climbing up a good trail. On this site there is one partly restored temple, richly ornamented with enormous plumed serpents, in the folds of which are seated human figures executed in a most pleasing style. There are also dates in a system of writing which thus far has resisted decipherment. This carved temple, presumably the House of Flowers which gives the place its Aztec name, is the only standing building at Xochicalco. But there is an impressive layout of courts, terraces, and rectangular mounds, extending over the top of the mountain and far down one side. There is also a higher part of the city, a sort of enclosure approached by a walled roadway, known as the fortress. No exact date can be given Xochicalco, but the decorated temple may belong to the thirteenth century of our era. The site was already abandoned when the Spaniards arrived.

The Tlahuica tribe, whose capital was Cuauhnahuac (Cuernavaca), had as their patron goddess Xochiquetzalli, the Goddess of Flowers. Across the gorge from the main street of modern Cuernavaca there is an Aztec victory

stone bearing the date 1469. It is a boulder with shield, arrows, and a battle-flag carved upon it, and it marks the taking of Cuauhnahuac by the warriors of Tenochtitlán (Mexico City). Also, an hour walk from the plaza will take you to the twin temple of Teopanzolco, which may be Aztec, and certainly belongs to the last century before the Spanish Conquest.

Unless the road is temporarily washed out, it is possible to go from Cuernavaca to the temple of Tepozteco, in a craggy mountain setting. However, this trip is very strenuous, requiring a long, stiff climb up from the Indian village of Tepoztlán and another climb down. This sculptured temple, dedicated to the *pulque* gods, dates from the middle of the fifteenth century. It can also be reached from the El Parque station of the railroad by a walk of several miles, or on horses secured in advance, if the party is not large. This does not exhaust the list of archaeological excursions which can be made from Cuernavaca, but it covers the historical range from Archaic to Aztec.

Mexico City is situated in the midst of a still richer province, and also contains the National Museum of Mexico, with unequalled collections of pottery, gold and jade jewelry, carved stones from all parts of the Republic, and several codices, or books of the Indians, dealing with history and ceremony. The Museum has the famous Calendar Stone, the Stone of Tizoc, which records the major conquests of the Aztecs up to Tizoc's death in 1486, the grotesque statue of Coatlicue, Mother of the Gods, and

many other sculptures found near the old center of Moctezuma's capital. Near the Cathedral, part of the foundations of the great temple of the Aztecs are in place. The enlargement of the pyramid, achieved by the addition of new layers of masonry on all sides, is indicated in these remains, and there is one large serpent-head still in place at the base of a balustrade to the stairway.

In this region, as in that of Cuernavaca, it is possible to see archaeological sites ranging from the earliest to the latest periods of pre-Columbian history. Archaic remains are plentiful, and the localities known as Zacañenco and Ticoman have been excavated by Dr. George C. Vaillant, who found pottery, figurines, and objects of stone in stratified layers. His was not the first work on archaeological stratifications in the Valley of Mexico, but remains to date the most profitable as regards precise information of progressive changes in style. At least six stages in the development of Archaic art in this region can now be recognized.

On opposite sides of the lava-flow which runs down from Mount Ajusco into the suburbs of the city are Copilco and Cuicuilco. Copilco, which may be approached through San Angel, has a quarry where the lava-rock is broken up, and it was there, about 1910, that Archaic figurines were first found in soil which had been covered by the lava. Excavations revealed well-preserved burials which can still be seen, just as they were uncovered, in tunnels under the flow. At Cuicuilco, situated near Tlalpam, on the opposite side of the solidified stream of

volcanic rock from Copilco, is an earthen structure rising in terraces like a Mexican pyramid, but of oval rather than rectangular shape. It stands well out in the lava-flow. Either it antedates the lava, or it was constructed on a spot of land around which the lava had previously flowed. Although it is generally classed as a monument of the Archaic Period, the figurines found in it are later than those of Copilco. However, the finding of figurines and potsherds in a pyramid does not mean much, since they may have been deposited long before the pyramid was built, in soil afterwards used in its construction. There is something of a mystery about Cuicuilco; it is an archaeological puzzle, but certainly does not date from the extreme antiquity sometimes ascribed to it.

The Archaic Period was succeeded, on the highlands, by the Toltec Period, whereas on the lowlands it was followed by the Maya Period, clearly earlier than the Toltec. Toltec art is very largely derived from antecedent Maya art, perhaps through other lowland cultures, such as the Olmec, Zapotec, and Totonac. There is a difference of opinion concerning the time when Teotihuacán and other great Toltec centers were founded. There is, however, not much doubt that the downfall of the Toltec Empire took place about A. D. 1220.

The stupendous ruins of Teotihuacán are easily reached from Mexico City by either train or automobile. The massive Pyramid of the Sun is located on one side of the Road of the Dead, which continues north to the Pyramid of the Moon, and in the opposite direction passes the great

enclosure known as the Citadel, in which is located the unfinished Temple of Quetzalcoatl. Some of these names, though fixed in popular usage, are not well supported by early references. The name Teotihuacán means "Where the Gods Dwell," but that is merely another way of saying "Where the Kings are Buried," for Toltec rulers were apotheosized at death.

The Toltec Empire, at the time of its greatest extent, reached into the north of Mexico and into southern Guatemala, and possibly into Nicaragua. Its trade was even more extensive. Quetzalcoatl, the last great ruler, divided his time among three capitals, one being Chichen Itzá in Yucatán. He tried to introduce a Maya religious cult among the Toltecs, but was only partially successful. It is believed that work on his marvellous temple at Teotihuacán, with its decorations of plumed serpents and sea-shells, was interrupted by civil war, and that it was later buried under a temple to the Mexican god Tezcatlipoca. At Teotihuacán, there are remains of interesting fresco paintings, and in the local museum there are examples of pottery, jade ornaments, copper bells, and stone carvings found on the site.

By the excellent automobile road connecting Mexico City and Puebla, it is now possible to visit Cholula, Tlaxcala, which is a short distance off on a side-road, and other places famous in Mexican history, which contain archaeological monuments. Cholula, where the religious teachings of Quetzalcoatl were maintained after the fall of the Toltec dynasty, has an enormous pyramid, con-

structed mostly of adobe bricks, but enclosing numerous walls and stairways surfaced with plaster. It is now being honeycombed with tunnels by archaeologists of the Mexican government, who hope in this way to reveal its contents without disturbing the outward form of the mound, which is about four times the size of the Great Pyramid of Egypt. Cholula seems to have been a dominant city after the downfall of Teotihuacán, and before the establishment of Tenochtitlán, capital of the Aztecs. The regional museum in Puebla contains many specimens found in and near Cholula.

The last period of pre-Columbian art in Central Mexico is the Aztec. At Tlaxcala, there is a building called Tizatlán, which contains fine frescos of this epoch. Also near Mexico City are the Aztec temples of Tenayuca and Santa Cecilia, which have been partly restored by the Mexican government. Of these, Tenayuca is the most interesting. The pyramid is surrounded by lines of threatening serpents in stone and plaster, and there are two altars with figures of the Xiulcoatl, or Fire Serpents, of Aztec religion. Reference has already been made to remains of the Aztec capital which can be examined *in situ*.

In the Valley of Toluca, now connected with Mexico City by a good road, there is a recently explored site called Calixtlahuaca, where an idea of the former culture of the Matlatzinca tribe can be obtained. This tribe was subdued by Tizoc, and its hieroglyph, Little-Net, is seen on the Stone of Tizoc.

The Mexican government has done excellent work in

strengthening and repairing ruins, to make them tourist-proof. It has been its policy to place on view at each site minor specimens, pottery, etc., and there are guardians who register the names of visitors and give information about the ruins under their care. However, the enjoyment of Mexican archaeology can be greatly enhanced if the visitors have been prepared previously on what they are to see and on general backgrounds of history, religion, and artistic symbolism.

There are ruins to be seen in nearly all parts of Mexico, as well as in the countries lying to the south of it. A most profitable excursion for persons interested in archaeology is the one to Oaxaca. This city is reached by train from Puebla. It lies in a region where the Zapotecs and Mixtecs developed civilizations with considerable individuality in art and ceremony. There are, in the Valley of Oaxaca, evidences of Archaic culture, but little work has been done in studying the succession of types in the curious figurines.

The great ruin is that of Monte Alban, where a whole mountain-top has been laid out in courts and platforms with monumental stairways. The actual buildings have long since fallen, for they were probably constructed of adobe faced with plaster. Perhaps the most romantic interest connected with Monte Alban is contained in the very rich find of gold, jade, pearls, objects of crystal, etc., in Tomb 7. It was made in 1932, by Dr. Alfonso Caso, now Director of the National Museum of Mexico, and the specimens are now exhibited in that institution. It seems

that a Mixtec chieftain, with several of his servitors, was buried in an old Zapotec tomb, which had been partly cleaned out for the new interment. A great many carefully made tombs of stone occur at Monte Alban, but sumptuous grave furnishings have been found in very few of them. The date of the Mixtec burial probably was within one hundred years of the Spanish Conquest.

Monte Alban offers evidence of having long been a city of power. Figurines of a late Archaic type have been unearthed in the foundations. It was the principal city of the Zapotecs, and many fine examples of Zapotec art, both stone sculptures and large funerary urns, have been discovered on the site. The Zapotecs had a flourishing culture when the Toltecs began their career of conquest, but it would seem that the finest Zapotec art follows the times of Quetzalcoatl. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the Zapotecs carried on the traditions of Maya and Toltec ceremonialism, and it was only in the fifteenth century that they began to suffer from competition, first with the Mixtecs, and secondly with the Aztecs. It is probable that they for a time lost control of Monte Alban, which lies very close to the dividing line between people of Mixtec and Zapotec languages.

Later constructions of the Zapotecs are seen in the finely preserved ruins of Mitla. This sacred city has royal cruciform tombs placed directly under richly ornamented chambers, some of which are intact except for fallen roofs. The geometric designs on the buildings of Mitla are generally admitted to have had a textile origin. The

architectural frames for these designs recall work at Monte Alban, but the patterns themselves are made according to a peculiar method. Small, carefully cut stones are built into the frets, zigzags, and other motives as a mosaic encrustation. The walls, like those found in Maya ruins, are formed of mortar and broken fragments of stone, but are faced with delicately cut masonry. Giant blocks, fifteen feet or more in length, are used at Mitla over the wide doorways, in strange contrast to the minute pieces employed in decoration. Also at Mitla, there are fragments of fresco ornament, recalling the drawings found in native books.

We know that Mitla was taken by the Aztecs, and there is every reason to believe that it was built at a late epoch in Zapotec history. There is a hill fortress within sight of Mitla, and several tombs lie at no great distance, one of which seems never to have been completed. The famous funerary urns of the Zapotecans are found in the carefully constructed tombs which have been met with in many localities.

Archaeological sites of the Mixtecs are not so accessible, nor are any known which possess much architectural interest. The fine polychrome pottery of the Mixtecs can be best studied in the National Museum of Mexico, which has a superb collection of it. Their history, recorded in a considerable number of ancient books painted on deer-skin and folded screen-wise, is remarkably full. From these histories, it is apparent that there were a number of independent kingdoms among them. Eight Deer, the most

eminent ruler of the tribe, made wide conquests, but does not appear to have established a complete dominion over the Mixtec and Zapotec region. Afterwards, the Aztecs put the principal towns of both tribes under tribute. The name Oaxaca comes from that of their military post, Huaxacac, which seems to have been put there to guard important trade-routes.

This exhausts the outstanding ruins in the dry country south of the Valley of Mexico, unless one wishes to visit the massive site of Quiotepec, situated close to the final water-gap of the Papaloapan River. This ancient city lies in a hot desert country back of Cuicatlan, and at a lower elevation than anything hitherto mentioned. East of it, across the mountains, is a region of heavy forest growth, in which are hidden interesting ruins, mostly of the Olmec culture. These can be visited only during the dry season, and then only if one is content to put up with rough conditions of travel.

Returning to Mexico City, there are other accessible and interesting sites to the north and northwest. One is the Toltec ruin known as Tula. It was excavated two generations ago, by Charnay, and some of its most imposing sculptures are now to be seen in the National Museum. The archaeological sites in the States of Michoacán, Colima, Jalisco, and Nayarit are numerous, but not outstanding. The minor arts have their own peculiar merits, however. The most impressive place on the northern frontier of the old civilized area of Mexico is La Quemada, reached from Zacatecas.

It is unfortunate that the summer visitor to Mexico is practically barred from the low-lying, humid region occupied by the Totonacs, the Olmecs, and the Mayas. North of Vera Cruz lies Cempoala, where Cortés recruited Totonac allies for his march against the Aztec capital. While this might be reached, it would be inadvisable to attempt the much more splendid Tajin near Papantla. The road to Tajin is difficult enough when roads are at their best.

Those who wish to enjoy the thrill which comes from surveying the monuments of Mexico's past should have sympathy and imagination. Ancient works of art are fossil emotions, and fallen cities are properly to be regarded as sermons in economics and statecraft. Why did they rise? Why did they fall? And is there a lesson for the proud cities of today in these crumbling memorials which speak of success and failure in the same breath?

# THE NOVEL OF THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION

by *Berta Gamboa de Camino*

LIKE the European War and the Chinese Revolution, the Mexican Revolution produced an immediate literary reaction. It began to appear at the beginning of the struggle, lasted the length of the conflict, and has had a period of flowering between 1931 and 1934. The name, "novel of the Mexican Revolution" has been given to this literary production, but only provisionally and in a conventional sense, for it is a mélange of memoirs, narratives, chronicles, and novels. This cycle includes only the works treating of the crisis-period of the Revolution of 1910, that is to say, from 1910 to 1924. It began with *The Underdogs*, by Mariano Azuela, published in 1914, and has described a biological curve, growing, reaching maturity, and showing the beginning of its decline—the line followed by concern with the Revolution. It is integrated by the subject which brought it to life, and also by the tendency or attitude of the writers, which marks their works with a certain unity. At first they narrated deeds and described scenes of camp-life during the Revolution, usually in the sierras; then came occupation with the military and political conflict in the cities; later there was a sharpening tendency toward tragic and truculent realism; then there developed a desire to search out and expound the pro-

found problems of the Revolution; this was followed by a tendency toward writing history out of statistical data mingled with personal memories of the professional-soldier authors; and, finally, there came novels drawn from the memories of the civilian elements, works of a decidedly regional character.

The novel of the Mexican Revolution is not tendentious in the manner of that of the European War, which relates its occurrences from a more or less covered pre-war attitude. The Mexican novel does not accuse the Revolution. On the contrary, the writers are enthusiastic believers in the principles and ideals which caused it to burst forth, though they do all concur in hostility towards the corrosive and poisoning element par excellence: politics. Those wishing to remain happy and optimistic limit their narratives to actions set "in the good old days of the Revolution," when it had not yet become political. Only in this way can they hide the tragedy of the facts, and even permit themselves the freedom of being humorists.

If this group is not considered as a unit, a cycle by itself, it must be thought of as isolated and sporadic. It has a place within a large class of novels which might be called cosmic, that is to say, novels whose hero is a cosmic force which tears down and sweeps away whatever it encounters, making men the instruments and victims of its absolute will. It is a subject known to the novelists of all times. Heroes have been made of storms, the desert, the wind, blizzards, a river, the sea, and of more abstract forces, such as tradition and progress. In the Americas, the

best contemporary novels have been inspired by cosmic forces: the *pampas* in Argentina, the woodlands in Colombia, the fluvial plains in Venezuela, the Revolution in Mexico, mechanization in the United States. The masterpieces of South America are of this type: *Don Segunda Sombra*, by Ricardo Güiraldes, *The Vortex*, by J. Eustacio Rivera, *Dona Barbara*, by Romulo Gallegos. To it belong the novels of the United States, those in the style of *Babbitt* and those which gave origin to such admirable films as *The Crowd*. To it, finally, belong the delicate Chinese novels of Cheng Tcheng: *My Mother and My Mother and I During the Revolution*.

In Mexico, the Revolution was a dissolving force which affected all social classes. During it, thousands of men ceased to be men, were transformed into irresponsible instruments of something omnipotent. "The Revolution," says a soldier in *The Underdogs*, "is a hurricane, and the man who abandons himself to it is no longer a man—he is a miserable dry leaf swept up by a gale. . . ." Its greatness and its results can be debated, but nobody can deny that from this destroying hurricane a new country was born; that the Mexico of today is a new birth, stammering and slow if you wish, but come to life which must be real and have positive value because it was conceived by sorrow in the midst of tragedy. The story of that birth is in the pages of the novel of the Revolution, put together out of the memories and meditations of those who saw, heard, and felt it all. Statistical books contain the facts of the economic and political development of

Mexico; the novels of the Revolution are a ledger of the spiritual travail of this people, still blindly seeking its proper form of expression.

The novel of the Revolution is original, not only as all Mexican novels have been—in subject and background—but also, additionally, in form. The revolutionary movement had special and unique characteristics. The things which happened here could be encountered as they were only among this people, in whom are mixed, transformed, and intensified the racial characteristics of two strong traditions, in a social medium which is a faithful reproduction of the geographic conditions of the country. Local color has been inevitable, and was until recently the one factor distinguishing the Mexican novel from the Spanish: the Colonial background of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries differentiating our novel of that period from the picaresque one of Spain; the rural and urban background of the nineteenth century differentiating our romantic novel and the realistic novel of the Independence from the regional novel of Spain. But originality of form generally escaped Mexican writers. Clinging to French and Spanish literary movements, they wrote in French and Spanish forms; separated from the reality of the land and from the life of certain social classes, they never achieved realism of language, despite attempts by some of them to transcribe the talk of adventurers and servants, of peasants and members of guerrilla-bands. The novelists of the Revolution have the advantage of a moment in history in which the literature of the whole world lacks direction. Neither

France nor Spain has literary schools like those of the nineteenth century to devise patterns and lay down limitations. Furthermore, the very subject matter of this literature—wars and the Revolution—demanded instant and spontaneous production; it poured out as lava comes from a volcano, without consideration of forms and manners. There was no time or place to ask what was *à la mode*, what tendency ought to be followed, what words the Academy authorized. So, brought to life by its own strength, was born the native and peculiar novel which might be called “the novel of the War.” That of the European War, those of the Chinese and Mexican Revolutions, are compendia of all the schools and all the tendencies. The novelists had to describe scenes of reality, narrate actual happenings, describe types and customs, transcribe dialogue from life, analyze, synthesize, and study the reaction of circumstances on those affected. So they wrote novels which are realistic, regional, sentimental, psychological, analytical, synthetic, works as complex as the conflicts which produced them and the men they include. The style had to be as varied as the form. In the novel of the Revolution, use is made in the name of naturalness and verisimilitude of slang, Mexicanisms, and local phraseology. Some of the writers have labored on their style only the amount necessary to temper the predominating realistic note, or to infuse lyricism. Others, the least subjective, mostly the journalists, have let their pens rush on, sometimes sacrificing correctness and elegance for the plastic form of their pictures and the vividness of their narratives.

From all this a new form of the novel has resulted, and it can therefore be said that Mexico has declared its literary independence of Europe.

The novel of the Mexican Revolution is essentially realistic. It must be admitted that the writers have not always known how to use the dangerous instrument realism is. At times they have abused it, sometimes because they have been unable to shade it or combine its gradations, other times because they have made it the sole aim of their work. Only in the finest achievements has the author given realism its true function, the role of incidental element it deserves. This has been the success of such works as *The Underdogs*, *The Eagle and the Serpent*, *Encampment*, *Let's Go with Pancho Villa*, *The Mob*, and *Land*.

Pathos also dominates this literature, a genuine pathos born of natural incidents. The writers have not had to invent situations or complicate events to produce effective emotional climaxes. Life itself, during the Revolution, was constantly pathetic, and pathos imposed itself, automatically displacing humor. Some recent writers have felt the need to react against the tragedy of the novel of the Revolution, and to write amusing things, to relate droll anecdotes and produce laughter, for there was very little to laugh at in these books. The Mexican public stands for them, reads them without horror, but simply with natural absorption, because it is made to see the tragedy, sorrow and misery along with the happiness, richness, and vitality. The reading public of the United States will be able to

bear the impact of this literature whenever it turns to it the noble interest of human curiosity. But only then will it be able, not merely to bear, but to enjoy, these pages in which, when humor begins to appear, it is to make a macabre joke, to give comic names to death, the firearms which cause it, or the penalties imposed for it. But there are also other works, like those of General Manuel W. González, in which the author sets out to relate droll episodes of campaigns, and like those of Rubén Romero, in which humor constantly tends toward irony.

The novel of the Mexican Revolution has undeniable value as history, almost nothing in it being fiction. The actions, personages, and scenes have been taken from real life. The novelists have brought their technique into play to unite these diverse elements, to give them more or less consistent recounting, to present them by means of an adequate form. The journalists have made stories and narratives out of isolated episodes, and elaborated chronicles out of their own personal memories. In both cases, imagination has played an insignificant role; history, on delving into these works, will find matter of great value. In them the political and economic historians of Mexico will have a sourcebook for attempts to explain the problems of Mexico—some of them born, others intensified, in that period of crisis which was the Revolution of 1910. To the historian of Mexican literature, the novel of the Revolution will be the clearcut link between the post-romantic novel of the nineteenth century and the one which must follow this first attempt to find a national form for the

literary genus which is the reflection of the lives of people and their profound problems.

The eager reader will find these works an inexhaustible spring of interesting information. They contain the psychology of a complex people, managing until recently to live by the formulae of European culture, but which, having come to grief, now is setting out to create a life native to itself. There are in it episodes telling of its stoicism (Aztec? Spanish?) which brings people to look death in the eye without blinking, with as little surprise as though seeing an old acquaintance; to give up life for a trifle; to have no last favor to request at the moment of being executed; to be dominated, at the moment of death, by only one feeling: the pride in dying so bravely that nobody can say that they trembled on looking into the mouths of guns. There is in it the complex religious feeling of the Mexican people, made up of tradition, Christianity, and fatalism, which, combined with stoicism, gives them easy resignation when confronted by inevitable facts, a religious sentiment in which there is much that is primitive and infantile, much that shows lack of comprehension. In it appear men who rob and kill, while appealing to their patron saints, whose emblems adorn their wide *sombreros*. In it is answered the question of whether the Mexican is valiant or not. In it there is the need to analyze his actions in the infinity of tragic and epic moments which were decisive, and in which he at times equalled the high heroes of antiquity, and at others was a disconcerting mixture of instinct, impulse, and indecision. In it is to be discovered

an ascetic people, knowing how to exist on nothing, inconsistently robbing and sacking one day in order, days later, along the road or in the mountains, to destroy or throw away what they have stolen, a people in love with adventure, ignorant of principles, unacquainted with ideals and problems, a people following a leader as its ancestors followed the tribal chief, even to the point of giving its lives for him, and all without asking the slightest recompense. To the Mexican reader, all these suggestions are allusions to something alive. A word evokes the image of a scene which has occurred a thousand times during his life, villages, roads, forests, situations, military trains, people of our land. One word brings to his ear the well-known popular-song melody we heard in those revolutionary days, reawakes all its words and all its significance. One word brings before us the figure of a leader whom we saw pass in triumph through the streets of Mexico City, whom we heard speak, whom—with the mobs—we once followed. We are reminded of curious details of those confused days, as for example of the way in which, at first, rank was determined in the army. "Do you know how to read?" Villa asked three young men from the Capital who joined him. "Yes, my General." "Then take the rank of lieutenants," the guerrilla-leader commanded. It is fascinating to observe the differing motives which brought so many different individuals together in the revolutionary ranks, the peculiarities of the peoples of various regions of the Republic. The picturesque language of the Revolution also attracts the attention, with its technical

phrases of the moment, some of which have become naturalized in the language, significant words, some of them full of irony, some of them barbed, others full of evocations.

Mariano Azuela occupies first place in this series of writers, both chronologically and as judged by critics. In *The Underdogs*, he relates, around the figure of the guerrilla-fighter, Demetrio Macías—who might be any Mexican *guerrillero*—the adventures of a small band of soldiers from the mountains and poor villages, of those at the bottom, for whom there is neither honor nor fame. In *The Flies*, he speaks of the provincial bureaucrats who fly toward the sun which gives them light and heat, people lacking convictions and ideas, ignorant of human dignity. In *The Bosses*, he deals with the problem of capitalism in small villages where the merchant from outside, allied with the clergy, is owner and master of lives and *haciendas*. These typical works of Azuela, in fact all of his books, are the most novelistic production of the Revolution.

Martín Luis Guzmán, a man of wide culture, a volunteer journalist in the revolutionary ranks, in touch with the politics of the time, writes, in *The Eagle and the Serpent*, his impressions of the struggle in the north of the Republic. He is, in the sense earlier explained, the most tendentious of the writers. He describes scenes, draws magnificent portraits of the revolutionary leaders, sets forth frankly his opinions of persons and actions; but the persistent motive between the lines is his protest against adulation and intrigue, against the ignorance and brutality

of improvised leaders, against cruelty and banditry. The eagle—the revolutionary ideal—he sees as constantly attacked by the base passions born under the protection of politics—the serpent. *The Shadow of the Leader* is an open attack on politics and the actions of the revolutionaries, triumphant, indulging in the effeminately degenerate life of the Capital under the protection of one who had been a leader, but was no longer more than the ghost of a hero. In this book the author no longer writes as a journalist, one who narrates his impressions and presents personages under their real names; here he disguises them and creates a *roman à clef*.

From this first period, there is also a little book written by Nellie Campobello. It is called *Cartridge*, and is made up of a series of short chapters, plastic pictures, vivid and tragic, in which the author relates the memories of her childhood in a revolutionary camp in a northern village. Scenes, types of soldiers and leaders, hair-raising actions, are related with intense emotion, with energetic strokes, in a language freighted with tragedy. It is a sort of epic of the revolutionary novel, ingenuous, rough, sometimes incorrect, but alive and real, breathing, full of human feeling and a deep pathos born of the contrast between the tragic subject and the innocence of the childish eyes beholding it, eyes made, like those of other children, for watching a circus or some marionettes.

There follows a group of writers whose works began to appear when the armed conflict ended, when memories could be summarized and an examination made of the

Revolution's problems. José Mancisidor writes *The Mob*, in which he denounces the ignorance of some military leaders who, without knowing whither they were bound, carried the masses with them. It relates the adventures of a group of volunteers who, following an incapable leader through the tropical mountains of Vera Cruz, encounter disillusionment and death. Gregorio López y Fuentes, in *Encampment*, describes scenes of crude realism and profound tragedy, which occur among soldiers encamped in a tiny village destroyed by the Revolution. In *Land*, the agrarian novel of the Revolution, he describes the life of Zapata's army, its peculiar combination of peasants and soldiers; he tells of Zapata's idealism, of how the people understood it and took hold of it, abandoning every idea which was not that of obtaining the land for the people; he relates true episodes in the life of Zapata, up to the time when the Federal Army intervened, and he died, a victim of base treason. López y Fuentes shows the growth of the Zapata myth—the belief that (like England's King Arthur or Portugal's King Sebastian) he is not dead, but hides in a cave from which, when the people need him, he will one day return; then the Indians will rally around him, making use of the rifles they keep in their straw huts, still clean and burnished. The Leader must return. The sybil of the region says so, she who has seen his silhouette outlined on the crests of the mountains, and has heard his horse's galloping hooves on the road. In his latest novel, *My General*, López y Fuentes recounts the life of a man of the people who rose to the heights during revolutionary days,

becoming a General. From that crest he descended to the final misery of those abandoned by fortune.

Rafael Muñoz—now considered the best story-teller of the Revolution—has written three books of stories consisting of unrelated episodes and anecdotes: *The Ferocious Chieftain*, *If They Must Kill Me Tomorrow*, and *The Evil Man*. His novel, one of the best of this cycle, is *Let's Go With Pancho Villa*. Rafael Muñoz is a renowned journalist who lived in contact with Villa, and knows the whole background of the army and the factions Villa commanded in his career of ups and downs. He has a gift for limning personal types. The two central figures of his novel are Villa, the man of personal magnetism who won over and dominated masses and individuals, and the pathetic figure of Tiburcio Maya, the peasant who lost wife, daughter, and property at the hands of Villa, but who, still hypnotized by him, sacrificed himself, dying rather than reveal his leader's hiding-place to Pershing's soldiers. Hernán Robleto, a Nicaraguan writer living in Mexico, wrote a similar work, *The Mascot of Pancho Villa*, a series of episodes of guignolesque realism.

Rubén Romero is the regional novelist of the State of Michoacán. His *Memoirs of a Native* are memories of a village boy during the Revolution. His realism is not that of a journalist relating the horrors of life in the camps, but that of a humorist describing the life and the bourgeois types in a village. In *The Innocent Village*, his latest novel, he narrates the adventures of a young student who returns from Mexico City to his own village. Romero constantly

tends towards regionalism. He describes admirably the picturesque customs of the villages, their religious celebrations, their social gatherings, days in the fields. He is essentially anecdotal, and at times it seems that his main object is to tell anecdotes, attributing them here and there to the characters in his novels. He has also, like the writers of social novels, a tendency to criticize the abuses perpetrated by officials in villages and provincial cities. In the title, *The Innocent Village*, the word "innocent" has the double meaning, ironic and bitter, that the village is ignorant of what is being done to it, and is also an expiatory victim, paying for another's crimes.

In August, 1934, General Manuel W. González published his book, "*With Carranza*." He says that he writes to produce his own sort of history, that is to say, narrative memories of the "true Revolution," the campaign led by Carranza against Huerta, and takes as his foundation the comic happenings which alternated with the tragic events of the struggle. Thus, the droll episode is the central part of the chapter, giving it its title. Around it, the author tells the history of Carranza's campaign, from its earliest days to its triumph. The episodes of the campaign thus are great iron links, joined together into a chain by small, multicolored links of light, gay anecdotes. General Francisco Urquiza published, almost at the same time, a book called "*I Remember that . . .*", in which he also sets down information for the historian of tomorrow. In his work, the anecdote is rarely humorous; it enters into the story as one of the author's many memories, alternates

with scenes and descriptions of types, things that seem insignificant, but reveal some psychological fact about the people. The subtitle, "*Isolated Visions of the Revolution*," explains the essential nature of this work. There are others, such as *Twenty Hair-Raising Episodes in the Life of Francisco Villa*, by Elías Torres, recent books of secondary historic and literary importance.

Despite all the excellences set down in favor of the novel of the Mexican Revolution, it cannot be said to be a complete success. This cycle can be considered a laudable attempt at producing a national novel. In this sense, this group of novels will always have its place in our literature, and its historical value. Some critics believe that the novel need not be the form of expression of the Mexican spirit, but that it will be found in music and painting. Nobody can decide this with certainty, for the true Mexican type is not yet defined, and it is impossible to say today what will be the form in which he will express himself. The novel of the Revolution has not, even approximately, equalled the South American novel. There the cosmic novel has reached perfection, doing honor to the vital drive given it by *The Chatterbox* of Sarmiento. Our novel cannot stand up under the comparison, which, in fact, should not be made, being unjustly disadvantageous to Mexico. The South American countries were founded differently, the racial types there have been becoming more clearly defined. The novel of the Revolution bubbled forth in Mexico as a natural, a fatal, result of the force of violent and transitory happenings, and is the reflection of them.

One should see it in this light in order to appreciate the potential values it undoubtedly contains, and which I have tried to point out. Provisionally, during the time of deciding the place of the novel of the Mexican Revolution, it must be affirmed that a familiarity with this literary production, as well as of the pictorial products of the Revolution—exactly as they were created—is a knowledge essential to whoever wishes to know and understand Mexico.

LIST OF THE PRINCIPAL NOVELS  
OF THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION

Mariano Azuela

*The Underdogs (Los de Abajo)*

*The Flies (Las Moscas)*

*The Chiefs (Los Caciques)*

*The Tribulations of a "Decent" Family (Las Tribulaciones de una Familia Decente)*

*Domitilo Wants to be a Deputy (Domitilo quiere ser Diputado)*

Nellie Campobello

*Cartridge (Cartucho)*

General Manuel W. González

*With Carranza (Con Carranza)*

Martín Luis Guzmán

*The Eagle and the Serpent (El Águila y la Serpiente)*

*The Shadow of the Leader (La Sombra del Caudillo)*

Gregorio López y Fuentes

*Encampment (Campamento)*

*Land (Tierra)*

*My General (Mi General)*

José Mancisidor

*The Mob (La Asonada)*

Rafael Muñoz

*The Ferocious Chieftain (El Feroz Cabecilla)*

*Let's Go with Pancho Villa (Vámonos con Pancho Villa)*

*If They Must Kill Me Tomorrow (Si me han de matar mañana)*

*The Evil Man (El Hombre Malo)*

Hernán Robleto

*The Mascot of Pancho Villa (La Mascota de Pancho Villa)*

Rubén Romero

*Memoirs of a Native (Memorias de un Lugareño)*

*The Innocent Village (El Pueblo Inocente)*

General Francisco Urquiza

*I Remember that . . . (Recuerdo que . . .)*

## SOME MODERN MEXICAN POETS

*by Elizabeth Wallace*

Tremulous lips,  
Lips of song;  
Lips of Theocritus  
And of Solomon.

Fondest caress  
The world can have,  
Embrace most passionate;  
Most lingering kiss,  
  
Is the burning kiss  
Of a song—  
Be it of Anacreon  
Or of Solomon.

—GABRIELA MISTRAL.

DOWN the perspective of the years there emerge certain figures which arrest the eye. They cannot be wholly ignored if we wish to understand modern poetic expression in Mexico. They stand out in the long vista of time, lonely luminaries, reviving after others have flickered and died; and from whose light the young moderns consciously or unconsciously have drawn inspiration, either by imitation or by negation of their talent.

Such is Sor Juana de la Cruz who stands, a white chaste statue, limned against the background of her age, Mexico

of the middle 17th century: a viceregal court magnificently extravagant, a church rich and corrupt, a literary world chattering and twittering in the strange artificial fashion of Góngora, a vast underworld of suffering Indians, discontented creoles and restless *mestizos* torn by conflicting desires. In this world she lived for forty-four years; twenty-eight of them in the semi-seclusion of the cloister. Her mind was intensely acquisitive, her intelligence extraordinarily capable of co-ordinating facts, and her soul permeated with an exalted mysticism. Her love-lyrics have a poignant sincerity, a loving simplicity, a passionate purity, a playful affection, that cannot leave one in doubt as to the reality of her experience. Sor Juana does not represent the age in which she lived, rather is she a miracle of the age. She was a learned woman in a country where none such existed. She was an eager inquiring spirit in a society that accepted authority. She was inventive, fresh, original, when it was the fashion to be artificial and imitative.

Such is Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, born into a deeply pious middle-class family at a time when wider horizons were opening, when there was eager questioning as to the meaning of life; when poetry was no longer an isolated and artificial world, but a part, and even an expression, of the soul. It was the beginning of the *Modernistic Movement*, and Nájera has become a symbol of its initial stirrings. He was only thirty-six years old when he died in 1895, but all through his short life (he began verse-making

at thirteen) he was a seeking soul torn by doubt and distilling his questionings into melodious beauty.

Such is Amado Nervo, who followed fast upon Nájera and is the full expression of Modernism as a Movement. Influenced by the French symbolists, he goes out of his way to break the ancient and respected rules of prosody: he delights in subtleties, words, unusual rhymes. He becomes a mystic, and later he has a passion for simplicity, for absolute sincerity of expression. He renounces poetic trimmings, he wants to elevate his soul with writings that are without technique, without rhetoric, without literature. In him, as Jorge Cuesta puts it, the man finally killed the artist.

Such is Enrique González Martínez, who has exercised a great influence on the present generation of poets-under-forty, whether they acknowledge it or not. As a Professor of literature he interpreted his favorite French poets, de Vigny, Leconte de Lisle, Henri de Regnier, and Verhaeren, and fascinated his students by his insight and serene understanding of nature. His last volume of poems, published in 1925, is characterized by a certain austere optimism and a noble dignity of conception.

Such is Ramón López Velarde, who brought, more than any other had heretofore done, the national, the Mexican atmosphere into his verse. He published only two volumes, for he died in 1921, only thirty-three years of age. In *La Sangre Devota* and *Zozobra* he broke with tradition and introduced a new note. The things of Mexico, her women, her festivals, her railroad trains that "roll along like Christ-

mas toys," her jungles suddenly illuminated by "the green lightning flash of parrots," her streets flooded at dawn by "the holy odors from the bakeries," everything having the color and taste and smell of Mexico he evokes, not as a photographer, but with the sure touch of a poet.

These five and numberless others have lighted the way for the generation of today: the young-men-under-forty who have lived through the confusion of civil strife, who have heard the noise of battle, who have seen the smoldering ruins, felt the smoldering passions, and have shared in the gradual emergence of a new Mexico.

Poetry as a means of livelihood is about as unremunerative a career in Mexico as anywhere else in the modern civilized world. So almost all the young poets are obliged to seek employment. They are in the government service, or they teach, and one or two fortunate ones are supported by their wives. Despite their vocations, the poets are very vocal, and the yearly output of books of verse is rather formidable. It is difficult for a foreigner to arrive at any worthwhile conclusions concerning the immortal value of these productions. It is perhaps equally difficult for the Mexican. At least, so one is led to believe by the immensely differing criticisms one reads. On the whole, however, what is most baffling is the almost universal laudation of poets among themselves. In this brief sketch an attempt will be made to present five of the younger poets, touching only on one or two characteristics of each, and giving some translations. It must be remembered however that English versions of Spanish poetry are at

best only a hint of their content and, too often, a distortion of their form.

The most productive poet of the younger group is undoubtedly Jaime Torres Bodet (1902- ). He is a dreamer and his dreams are touched with melancholy, a gentle melancholy expressed in touchingly simple language, as in his poem *Consolación de Otoño* (*Autumn's Consolation*).

And we shall say: *this* has been  
love, and that was sadness:  
a perfume, a star, a sound—  
Life has fulfilled its promise.

However, he is mentioned here not because of this trait, which is not uncommon to all young poets, but because of the recurrent theme of Mexico in his lines. He represents in a way, the heritage of Velarde, changed from the objective attitude of the latter to a more reflective and poetic expression. He loves his country, he sees her weaknesses, he feels intensely her beauty. In *Poem of a Cruel City* he exclaims:

Oh incongruous Mexico, dolorous and gay,  
Sonorous as bronze, fragile as glass,  
  
Made up of melody, of hates and joy,  
Of stubborn prejudice, of boundless energy,  
  
Of doubtful elegance and of glaring red,  
Oh Mexico! with your bleeding Spanish heart. . . .

In a lighter tone he sings in *Mexico Sings a Roundel in my Songs of Love*:

Mexico is in my songs.  
Most cruel sweet is she,  
All hearts she does transform  
To rounded drops of honey.

And one day you will know her,  
Friends of another land:  
Her colors are of gladness,  
Her taste is bitter-sweet.

So fertile is she that her perfume  
Is of vanilla when it's ripe;  
So light she is, a breathed prayer  
Will blow her far away.

With quick insight he tells us how we may know her:

Thou shalt have known her utterly  
When thou canst swift repeat  
*Quién sabe?* with the gesture  
Proverbial of my home—

*Quién sabe?* Grief! good luck!  
*Quién sabe?* Good luck, or love!  
*Quién sabe?* from the cradle.  
*Quién sabe?* from the grave—

This cry is the common cry of humanity:

Thus Mexico would probe  
The secret haunting doubt:

A sinister cloud encircles her—  
What may the future bring?

Carlos Pellicer belongs to the last century by just three years, for he was born in 1897. His poetry is a riot of color and of musical cadences that makes one think of the paintings of Renoir and André and of the music of Debussy and Ravel. There is no profound philosophy, no questioning, no despair. He is interested in making new forms of verse. Frequently he has a laughing touch, light and rare, which distinguishes his work, and a note of song that is new.

### SEGADOR

(*The Reaper*)

(To José Vasconcelos)

The Reaper with pauses of song  
Reaped at dusk,  
His sickle so sharp  
It cuts the sweet grain, and it cuts the dusk.  
The Reaper who treads the golden fields  
With swishing noise of cutting blade,  
Laying low slender stalks of gold,  
Sweeps also the twilight away.  
He reaped the blond grain;  
He paused, and it was music—  
His shadow lengthened in the dusk,

In his eyes shone a light that at times  
Darted over the countryside.  
The sickle was sharpened so fine  
That he cut at one time  
The grain, and the last golden ray of the evening.

## DESEOS

(*Longing*)

(To Salvador Novo)

Tropic land, why did you fill  
My hands so full of color?  
Everything I touch is turned to gold.  
Through subtle twilights of other lands  
I shall tinkling pass, a glass sunflower.  
Let me for a single instant  
Cease to be all noise and color;  
Let me for a single instant  
Change the climate of my heart,  
Absorb the shadow of a deserted house,  
In silence lean on lovely balconies,  
Enwrap myself within the confines of a gentle prayer,  
Stroke with loving touch your shining hair,  
And write my thought with pencil sharpened fine.  
Oh! to cease to be for one brief moment  
The First Lieutenant of the Sun!  
Tropic land; why did you fill  
My hands so full of color?

## ESTUDIO

*(Study)*

(To Pedro Enríquez Ureña)

I'll play with the houses of Curaçao,  
And I'll place the sea on the left,  
And I'll make more suspension bridges,  
Whatever poets say!

We are in Holland and in America,  
And it is a toy island  
With rule of a queen  
And windows and doors of joy.  
With the cords of the lyre  
And gay little kerchiefs  
We shall fit us out sailboats  
To take us nowhere.

The State House is too small  
For a Dutch family.

In the evening Claude Monet will come  
To eat things that are blue and electric,  
And through these dubious streets  
We'll march Rembrandt's Night Watch.

Take me to the port of Curaçao,  
Island made for play  
With rule of a Queen  
And windows and doors of joy.

If Pellicer reminds us of color, José Gorostiza makes us think of blue water, the lapping of waves on the pebbly beach, or breaking foam on the shore. In many of his poems he has adopted the style of the old Spanish ballads. By delicate, patient workmanship he has made of them a thing of beauty and something entirely his own. Perhaps they should only be read as the title indicates, *Songs to be Sung in Boats*, in order to feel the full force of their charming rhythm. Some of his phrasing is delightful. He speaks of the lighthouse as the "scarlet shepherd of the fishing craft." He exclaims, "Autumn! you strip the world of gold!" In a quatrain which he calls *A Little Little Song*, he compresses the life of the fisherman:

The boats sail out at dawn,  
And have no time for love,  
Since they never come back again  
Or else, come back to rest.

Another which he calls *Prayer*:

The little brown fishing boat  
Was weary of sailing.  
Upon the sands it began to pray  
"Make for me oh Lord  
A harbor on this seashore!"

expresses a very human egotistic instinct. The two poems that follow may give a hint to the reader of the music of Gorostiza's verse.

## QUIEN ME COMPRA UNA NARANJA

(*Who Will Buy me an Orange*)

Who will buy me an orange  
To comfort my soul?—  
A ripe, ripe orange  
Shaped like a heart.

The salt sea water on my lips,  
The salt sea water in my veins,  
I taste the sea.

She will not give me hers  
To kiss and keep,  
The tender sheaf of kisses  
I may not reap.

No one asks to drink  
My heart's blood.  
Myself, I cannot tell  
If it flows, or now has ceased,

Just as boats are lost.  
Woe is me!  
Just as clouds flit past,  
And boats, so was I lost.

Since no one asks for it  
No more have I a heart.  
Who will buy me an orange  
To comfort my soul?

## LA ORILLA DEL MAR

(*The Seashore*)

Neither water nor sand,  
Seashore of the land.

The water sonorous  
Is foam and no more.  
The water before us  
Cannot make the shore.

Because it must rest  
On some soft strand  
The edge of the sea  
Is neither water nor sand.

Things discreet  
Simple, sweet,  
Such things meet  
Just like the shore.

And so with the lips  
That are longing to meet.  
Neither water nor sand  
Is the edge of the sea.

I look on myself  
As a thing dead and past,  
Abandoned, alone,  
In a desert that's vast.

And since I must suffer.  
Tears and sorrow for me!  
Neither water nor sand  
Is the edge of the sea.

Salvador Novo has just entered the thirties and might be considered as one of the very young. He has published as yet only one volume of poems, but another is promised shortly. It is possible that he possesses too witty a mind to become a notable poet, but his whimsical imagination plays charmingly with the pictures he evokes.

In his poem, *Early Morning*, he describes the city

In the watery sky  
Floats white soapy lather,  
The city dries its face  
With shreds of fog,  
And opens leaden eyes.

My soul, a hurried traveler,  
Makes haste to say goodbye  
To his past at the station.  
Trains are always on time.

From eyes the night is brushed away.  
Faces are fixed with little duties  
To learn, to teach, to work—  
Touch and taste are dead.  
Perhaps my heart still beats.  
Heigh ho! it's morning! why  
Strangle it in a cigarette?

He expresses unorthodox ideas on education. He is a boy at school and reflects thus:

I am about to finish my sixth year.  
After, in all probability,  
I shall learn all one should.  
I shall be a doctor,  
I shall have ambitions, a beard and wide trousers.  
But if I have a son,  
I shall see to it that no one shall ever teach him anything.  
I want him to be as idle and happy  
As my parents never allowed me to be,  
As my grandparents never allowed my parents to be,  
As God never allowed my grandparents to be.

In *Viaje* (*Trip*) he plays with nature thus:

The *nopales* stick out their tongues at us.  
But the cornstalks in rows,  
With their ragged little caps,  
And their books beneath their arms,  
Wave their ragged sleeves at us.  
The *magueyes* do Swedish gymnastics,  
Five hundred in a row.  
Who wants to play tennis with *nopales* and prickly pears  
Across the net of telegraph wires?  
Afterwards we'll have a Turkish bath  
In a secret garden of the mountains.  
We'll have a shower from the rainbow  
And we'll dry ourselves with dust.

Xavier Villaurrutia is almost as young as Salvador Novo, but has a very different form of poetic expression, as well as another source of inspiration. He is touched by the ecstasy of simple things that must pass, their space displacement, their sound texture, all their pitiful shabby and evocative details. He tries to see fleeting every day things and endeavors to fix them in word pictures. He seems to feel at the same time their importance and their priceless fragility.

### THE WIND

The wind plays with distances:  
It brings horizons near,  
It starts the trees to swaying,  
It lifts magic glasses to the landscape.

The wind plays with sounds:  
It shatters heaven's casements,  
And fills with silvery liquid echoes  
The spiral passage of the ear.

The wind plays with colors:  
It tints leaf-green the rivulet,  
Then sudden, changes it to blue  
Or clothes it with a tasseled cloud.

The wind plays with memories:  
It sweeps away the empty sounds  
And leaves us silent mirrors  
In which we see the long-lived years.

## AMPLIFICACIONES

*(Exaggeration)*

In the common room—  
Fantastic, bare,  
With yellow candle light,  
Shrinking with fear,  
Within my temples strikes the hour  
From some mysterious clock,  
Inexorable, ceaseless.

Solitude creeps apace  
Like dark shadows,  
On the sheet-like wall,  
Like faces of yesterday  
Peering through  
Framed window panes.

And silence moves and flutters  
Around the feeble flame  
Like the wing of what dread omen?  
Of what insect? A wing that caresses,  
A wing that chills, that makes one shrink.

These five authors represent some tendencies of the young writers of today. They are only a few from the many who are trying to make vocal the aspirations, the hopes, and the faith of renascent Mexico.

In studying their work we are impressed by what is

common to humanity. We all drink at the same sources of inspiration the mysteries of life, of death, of love, the beauty of nature, the significance of little things. Our different approaches constitute the fascinating study of race psychology, of race history. We pay homage to those who give voice to the unspoken songs of the voiceless.

Oh man, dumb flesh,  
Lift up your eyes  
To the wonder  
Of him who sings.

All thou lovest  
In earth or sky  
Speak from his lips  
Inspired and pale.

—GABRIELA MISTRAL.

## AMERICA AND THE AMERICAS

*by Hubert C. Herring*

THERE is a quaint and obstinate conceit that all Americans live in the United States, and that America comes to an abrupt end in Key West and the Río Grande. The 120 millions who live north of those landmarks cling to the word "American," and give but scant attention to the 110 millions who live in the twenty sovereign republics, great and little, which divide between them the substantial area between San Diego and Cape Horn, a span of some 8,000 miles. Nor do we give much heed to those Americans who live on the other side of Niagara Falls; they are dismissed and forgotten as subjects of an alien king. We have coined the term "Americanism" to cover the life and acts of the peoples of these forty-eight states, and in the process have cut ourselves off from the other Americas and the vivid variety of Americanisms which flourish under other flags. Our America has in effect seceded from the larger America. It is not a conspiracy, but a national state of mind.

The secession will not stand. The destinies of the United States lie with the other Americas. For better, for worse—in good times and in bad—there is a destiny which resides in the Western Hemisphere which binds Americans together. We are bound with the purse-strings, if not with the affections. We must sell the Chileans our needles and

the Argentines our sealing-wax, whether we like the Chileans and the Argentines well or not at all. The Americans will buy and sell each other's wares, or else we will be unhappy indeed. Trade makes us brothers of a sort, though brothers are not necessarily friends.

There are many excellent reasons why the Americans should find common cause.

There is trade to be shared, cultivated, and increased. The mines and fields and factories of the Americas yield an abundance. The sharing of this abundance between the Americas will enrich all. The traders should increasingly serve the cause of amity. We are generally disliked in Latin America, save in Brazil. The increase in trade waits upon many factors, not all economic. Men trade with their friends, and there is still much lacking in friendship between the United States and the Latin American peoples.

There are untapped reservoirs of cultural wealth waiting to be shared. Rival and ardent nationalisms defeat the sharing. The Latin American peoples, by and large, are vital, vibrant, aspiring. There is fire and determination among their leaders. Poets, artists, musicians, economists, students of government, explorers of the tortuous trails of social control—all of these Latin America produces in generous numbers and encouraging quality. The very uncertainty and volatility of political and social institutions throughout Latin America furnish fertile soil for inventiveness.

Latin America possesses storehouses of old civilizations. Its society rises upon the ruins of older societies—Mayan, Tarascan, Aztecan, Zapotecan, Quechuan—and the wealth

of the old is distilled into the new. Latin American civilization is flavored and colored by this heritage. The cultural pattern takes its contours from Indian king and craftsman as it does from Spanish merchant and soldier. The Indian served to fashion American life. The total of his contribution is difficult to compute, but the reality of that contribution is incontestable.

American civilization stands to gain much through the sharing of the cultural and economic life of the hemisphere. Each of the great cultural groups in the Americas will contribute—the Anglo-Saxon, the Spanish, the Portuguese, the Indian. Latin America and Anglo-Saxon America will be immeasurably enriched as they share their peculiar gifts, economic and cultural.

The Americas should find unity, for they are bound together by a common political history. These peoples of the New World were all subjects of the Old. All were caught by the same passion for freedom. All fought that they might be free. All give at least lip-service to the democratic ideal. All professed to be done with the errors and tribulations of Old World statecraft. That the performance, North and South, has not measured up to the profession is true, but not conclusive. The Americas may still prove that they have profited by the follies of Europe, that they are capable of finding common ground for international cooperation, that they can establish in the western hemisphere a zone of sanity from which older errors may be effectually excluded. This dream was shared by Thomas Jefferson and Simón Bolívar. It has not been realized.

Killings in the Gran Chaco and Leticia and Nicaragua belie it. The dream will not down. There are sober citizens in the twenty-one free and sovereign republics of America who dare to hope that there is intelligence enough, imagination enough, conscience enough, to contrive means whereby a new and fairer civilization, in which free peoples will cut a new pattern of international association, can be achieved.

The very term "Latin America" is specious and misleading. It seems to stress a unity, whereas there is little unity between these peoples. The Latin Americans are so numerous and so various, of so many races and so many minds, living in so broad a variety of geographic settings, producing such a range of economic goods, that it will be well to study the map, fixing a few markers along the way. We will, therefore, consider the puzzle-pattern of Latin America; sketch in some of the physical contours and areas; make note of the racial backgrounds of her peoples and the languages which they speak; list the things she produces from soil and mine-shaft and shop; describe the social structure of her classes; and paint the picture of the political life which is built upon all these other elements.

Geography explains many things about peoples. Man is made not only by his grandfathers, but by the soil on which his tent is pitched. Climate contributes to character —we are what we are because of rocks, the mountains, the rivers, the heat and cold, the fertility of the soil. We cannot blame or credit the weather for all our ills or successes, but it is one of the factors which must be reckoned.

Latin America reaches from 30° latitude north to 55° latitude south. Its span comprises broad bands of the semi-tropical, tropical, and temperate, and Cape Horn pushes down into the zone of bitter cold. The wide range of climate helps to determine a wide variety of men and human interests.

The dominant physical and psychological marker on the Latin American map is the high Cordillera, which rears its stubborn spine from Mexico to Cape Horn. This mountain range, punctuated as with exclamation points by the snow-capped peaks, from Popocatepetl in Mexico to Aconagua in Argentina—young mountains compared with the gentle, worn ranges of the eastern United States and eastern Brazil—has shaped the course of much history, and has served to contribute to the cultural pattern of the peoples who dwell upon its slopes and the plateaus which it creates. These mountains made for isolation. They set the Indian peoples of Mexico, Guatemala, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia apart from the swift tides of modern civilization. Locked away in their mountain valleys, the Indian peoples clung tenaciously to habits of life which flourished centuries before the first ships of Cortés and Pizarro appeared off the coasts of Mexico and Peru. The *conquistadores* had made short shrift of the people of Cuba, for they were easily reached; Mexico and Peru escaped with but superficial wounds. The mountains protected them, and life went on serenely. Furthermore, the mountain ranges set national boundaries. Chile, whose shoestring territory stretches out 2,600 miles in that narrow strip which lies

between the Pacific and the Andes, owes its national life to those mountains. In the north, the mountain range has insulated Peru and Ecuador and Colombia from Brazil, though it has not prevented a running fight between these countries for the possession of areas in the upper waters of the Amazon. The mountains have changed the climatic pattern of great areas. Much of Mexico, Guatemala, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia, which by the rule of latitude should be tropical or semi-tropical in climate and habit, is thrust decisively into the area of temperate or colder climate by the rude hand of altitude. It is cold in Mexico City, Quito, Bogotá, and La Paz, no matter how near they may be to the Tropic of Cancer, the Equator, or the Tropic of Capricorn. Cold weather has a share in explaining conduct, whether it be in La Paz or Vancouver.

There are vast reaches of tropical lands. There is the great basin of the Amazon, hot, wet, immeasurably fertile, and largely untenanted. There are the lowlands of Mexico and Central America and the island republics of the Caribbean. These lands were easily reached and subjugated. Here were lodged millions of slaves from Africa and stray wanderers from every land, east and west. Here have mingled and fused peoples of every race—Oriental, African, and all manner of European. Life is easy but precarious. Food grows without argument; housing presents no problem; clothing requires little thought.

Rivers also help to explain the diverse lines upon which the republics of Latin America have developed. The Amazon, the Orinoco, and the Río de la Plata determined much

of the economic and political pattern of Venezuela, Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, and Paraguay. The rivers made great areas accessible to traders; traders established settlements; the colonists who followed the traders drove out the Indians. That is the story of the East Coast. The total lack of sizable rivers on the West Coast goes far toward explaining the development of Chile, Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador. Because there are no rivers, white exploitation was confined to coastal lands, and as a result Indian life was relatively untouched. The lack of water communications on the West added new vigor to Bolivia's demand for access to the Pacific; the three-handed fight between Chile, Peru, and Bolivia, in the War of the Pacific, resulted; Bolivia's defeat made her turn more eagerly toward the Atlantic, and made inevitable the bloody fray in the Chaco.

There is but little of Latin America which lies in the temperate zone—the southern tip of Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile. Here life tends to repeat the experience of the United States, politically, socially, economically.

There is no Latin America, strictly speaking, nor is there such a man as a Latin American. The term is too neat and conclusive, and presumes to cover too diverse peoples. It is generally adopted as a convenient cover-all with which to describe the twenty republics which lie south of us. These range in size from tiny Salvador, in which some 1,500,000 persons live in an area of 13,000 square miles, to the imperial expanse of Brazil, covering over 3,000,000 square miles, an area somewhat in excess of that of the continental

United States, excluding Alaska. Latin America as an inclusive term breaks down. Too many sorts of people live there. They cannot be thus neatly lumped together.

The racial pattern of Latin America is a vast conglomerate. "Latin" America is Latin in the sense that its ruling classes have blood ties with the Latin lands of Europe—Spain, Portugal, France. Eighteen of these republics are, under this racial pattern, linked with Spain. One only, Brazil, is linked with Portugal. One, Haiti, claims France as her Latin motherland. Some of these twenty republics have a fair case for stressing their Latin, their European, stock. Argentina and Uruguay are indubitably Spanish, with a heavy addition of Italian and other European elements. Little Costa Rica presents a white European face. Chile, for the most part, falls on the white side of the racial ledger. Having said that much, we must shade the ledger. The other republics are superficially Latin, but fundamentally of other bloods. Haiti is Negro, and her French blood is a very thin veneer. Brazil is Portuguese, but with so heavy an intermingling of other European and African strains as largely to submerge her Portuguese character. Cuba's is a racial tangle in which the Spanish, some Indian, much Negro, and a scattering of all the bloods of the world mingle. Next to the European Latin contribution to the racial conglomerate of Latin America is the Indian element. The Indian, the first settler, furnishes the racial base of the bulk of the Latin American republics. In some—notably in Mexico, Peru, Ecuador, and Bolivia—those of predominantly Indian stock outnumber by four or five times those

in whom European blood is uppermost. The Indian element shades off to lesser proportions in the other nations. Those in which the Indian elements predominate might well be called Indo-American rather than Latin American. No name fits them all.

Latin America is divided on the line of language. In one country, Haiti, French is the official language, though in the mountain villages where the great bulk of the people lives, French has been diluted with so much of African dialects that it is scarcely recognizable. In Brazil, Portuguese is spoken. In the other eighteen republics, Spanish is the official language. That does not complete the record. Indian languages still flourish, and there are millions of Latin Americans totally ignorant of words with Latin roots. Over 2,000,000 Mexicans cling to their Tarascan, Mayan, Zapotecan, Aztecan, and forty other Indian dialects, and speak no Spanish. Fully one-half of the 5,000,000 Peruvians still speak the language of the Quechuas. Over half of Bolivia clings to its ancient tongue.

Economically Latin America produces practically every crop, and possesses every natural resource needed to afford virtual self-sufficiency, were it not for geographic barriers and the artificial restraints of national lines. Copper in Mexico, Chile, Peru; tin in Bolivia; petroleum in Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, Bolivia, Paraguay, and Argentina; sugar in Cuba and the other Caribbean islands, Mexico, and several other states; coffee in Brazil and the Caribbean area; wheat and cattle from Uruguay, Paraguay and Argentina; rubber in the Amazon valley; silver and gold and most of

the rarer metals scattered generously among the nations which hold the great Cordillera. Only the absence of coal and iron in areas readily tapped, and from which communications are easy and cheap, postpones the industrialization of Latin America. Economically Latin America has been, and will continue to be, a producer of raw materials for her own consumption and for export to those nations where cheap iron and coal have created the great industrial centers. This is the economic handicap which nature has placed against all of Latin America. She produces the raw materials out of which the other peoples contrive the finished products, and from which they have, under the economic system which has thus far prevailed, taken the major toll of profit.

There are two classes in Latin America—the workers and the owners. The middle class, as we know it in the United States, has not yet emerged. This generalization needs shading, but it describes with substantial accuracy the social pattern of the twenty nations of Latin America. The middle stratum of merchants and traders and professional men is very thin indeed in Bolivia and Peru, a little thicker in Brazil and Chile, still thicker in Argentina and Uruguay, but has nowhere assumed the power exercised by the corresponding group in the United States. We find, for example, in Bolivia a feudalism as pronounced as that of England in the seventeenth century. A handful of landlords own the land and dictate political and economic terms. A larger number form the bodyguard of hangers-on to the ruling class. The Indians, who outnumber the whites

by five to one, do the work, and have a social status little above slavery. In Argentina, on the other hand, another relatively small class owns the land, but its power is increasingly challenged by a rapidly growing middle class.

Theoretically the governments of Latin America are all democracies. They have constitutions fashioned for the most part after that of the United States, with the same checks and balances—executive, legislative, and judicial. Democracy in Latin America has proved itself a rather fitful reliance. The explanation will be found largely in the two-class system which prevails. Government has become the prerogative of the topmost class, or of such sector of that class as is able to seize power. Presidents represent those ruling groups. Legislatures are tolerated so long as they are acquiescent. There are exceptions, but only enough to prove the rule.

Social and political change in Latin America has, up to the present hour, been subject to the arbitrament of revolution, not of ballot-boxes. The bulk of these revolutions have been political, not social. They have represented feuds between rival cliques within the upper strata of society. The Mexican revolution which swept Porfirio Díaz from power in 1911, and has ranged off and on ever since, was fundamentally a social revolution. It was a middle-class movement, supported by an aroused proletariat. Power gained, Mexico repeats the experience of other Latin American republics by rearing a new ruling class which develops feuds within its ranks.

There will undoubtedly be fresh revolutions in several

Latin American countries. They will increasingly represent the determination of middle-class leaders, including a growing number of intellectuals, supported by workers in shops and field, to challenge the effective feudalism which has flourished throughout Latin America.

Universal suffrage, at least for males, is the rule. In some countries, except in times of greatest stress, votes are counted honestly. In others only the most innocent believe that the effort to vote is justified. Dictators flourish in the political atmosphere of a two-class society. Where there are only a few whose favors must be purchased, only a few who must be kept in line, the dictator's course is easy. Díaz ruled a feudal society, as does Gómez in Venezuela today. Dictatorship rests upon the acquiescence of the economically powerful, and the control of the military. It is threatened when opposed by a growing, intelligent middle class, and by workers who have found spokesmen. There are a number of half-way dictators—Benavides of Peru, Alessandri of Chile, Justo of Argentina, and Terra of Uruguay—whose power is being rudely challenged and threatened by the emergence of such leadership.

It is difficult to conjecture as to the future of inter-American relations. The obstacles to fair and generous co-operation are many. We Americans are divided by barriers of geography, race, language, and cultural tradition. Those who speak Spanish are grievously divided. We have seen how little love is lost between Peru and Colombia, between Paraguay and Bolivia. Latin America has reared a structure of nationalisms, each of which is fully as pug-

nacious and ominous as our own 100% Americanism. These nationalisms are decked out with all the old contempts and hatreds. The fine art of looking down on other people is well established. The Argentine knows that he is superior to the Brazilian; the Uruguayan dismisses the Mexican as a halfbreed; the Mexican suspects the patriotism of the Cuban—just as the fervent North American knows, beyond peradventure of doubt, that all Latin Americans belong to those inferior people in the twilight zone of unaccomplished progress. If belligerent nationalism is a mark of civilization, then Latin Americans are very civilized people indeed.

Do we dare to contend for any genuine Pan Americanism in the face of the obvious handicaps? Is it possible that here in the Western Hemisphere we can create a zone of sanity, from which old errors shall be banished? Is it possible to cut a new pattern of international cooperation, in which free peoples will unite to their common advantage? It is easy to ask questions, hard to answer them. But the dream of a new world, freed from the onus of ancient error, is exciting.

To us, as citizens of the United States, there are certain very definite areas in which we can set our own house in order in relation to Latin America. There are things which we can do, and which we must do, if the nations of Latin America are to put confidence in our good intentions or our good sense. This does not mean that we alone are guilty of rendering inter-American cooperation ineffective. It does mean that we, the most powerful American state, are

under a special responsibility to assume moral leadership in creating a new scheme of things.

First of all, we must re-define—or forget—the Monroe Doctrine. Samuel Guy Inman is right in saying that it has been “for the American continent at once the most powerful unifying force and the greatest cause of division and misunderstanding.” In its inception, it was a chivalrous declaration on the part of the strongest of the nations of the new world that the freedom of this hemisphere should not be jeopardized by the meddling of Old World politicians. As such, it was hailed by many of the emerging leaders of the Latin American peoples. It was the Magna Charta of the New World. If it had stopped there, all would have been well. But the trouble with Doctrines, theological, political, what you will, is that they insist upon growing. The Monroe Doctrine grew into an article of American faith. The body of this new faith was that the United States stands as the protector of weaker peoples against the machinations of the warlords of Europe; from this developed the quaint conceit that not only are we elect of Providence to protect Americans against Europeans, but also to protect Latin Americans against themselves.

The Monroe Doctrine was launched auspiciously. It said to Europe: You are to stay out of our play-yards. It ended up by saying to the Latin Americans: We are here to improve you; if you do not wash your own faces, we will come in and wash them for you. We did not content ourselves with thinking it. We said it. We acted upon it. We organized an imposing number of face-washing expedi-

tions, whereby we sought to civilize the Nicaraguans, the Haitians, the Dominicans and Cubans, and sundry other people. Because the Monroe Doctrine was invoked to legitimize these face-washings, the Monroe Doctrine has become a word of mockery throughout Latin America.

Latin American opposition to the Monroe Doctrine is rooted not in the Doctrine itself, but in the turns which the Doctrine has taken. "The Monroe Doctrine," writes John Bassett Moore, "was in its origin a defiance to those who would suppress independent governments and restore the system of commercial monopoly and political absolutism on the American continents. It was in this sense that it found an enthusiastic response in popular opinion." With such a definition of the Doctrine none but the captious could find fault. Unfortunately the United States failed to stick to the text. In 1904, Theodore Roosevelt wrote the memorandum which cast in formal phrases the mischief-making principle. This, the "Roosevelt Corollary," announced that "chronic wrongdoing, or an impotence which results in a general loosening of the ties of civilized society, may in America, as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation, and in the Western Hemisphere the adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine may force the United States, however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of such wrongdoing or impotence, to the exercise of an international police power." It is against the Doctrine thus amended and interpreted that the storms of Latin American indignation have lashed. It is angrily denounced as a symbol of Anglo-Saxon insolence

and self-righteousness, as evidence of the high-handed assumption of dominant power by the United States. James Bryce, after his trip around South America, interpreted the South Americans as saying, "Since there are no longer rain clouds coming up from the East why should our friend, however well-intentioned, insist on holding an umbrella over us?"

Fortunately, some of this fear was set at rest by the able memorandum on the Doctrine, written by J. Reuben Clark when Under-Secretary of State. This memorandum indicated the general intention of the United States to return to the earlier meaning of the Doctrine. But we must be more explicit. The Monroe Doctrine sticks like a burr in the side of America. If it could be erased from the record, and if the nations of the Americas could enter into a new covenant which would bind them to resist together any encroachment from without, we would have a fairer chance for peace. It is idle to talk of asking the Latin American republics to accept the Monroe Doctrine as the rule of the hemisphere; it has taken on too bad an odor. It might be possible to achieve the same ends by writing the fundamental emphasis of the Doctrine into the international understandings by which the Americas are to work together.

Second, Cuba. Cuba will remain a sore spot in inter-American relations until her wounds, economic and political, are healed. The administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt deserves praise for abrogating the Platt Amendment, and for making a courageous beginning at reciprocal re-

duction of tariffs. The stranglehold which the Platt Amendment gave to us made Cuba a vassal colony. It played a large part in rendering Cuba's efforts for political independence and integrity of no avail. Our economic dominance—we invested \$1,500,000,000 in Cuba—linked with our political dominance through the Platt Amendment, with the threat of intervention always present, prostituted the life of the island. Machado and his incredible ways were no accident. He was the natural product of the impossible situation which we had created. Cuba faces an accumulation of political and economic ills which will require years for their liquidation. If the United States will continue to exercise wisdom and a reasonable generosity in her dealings, the wounds we have inflicted may be healed; and in the healing a fruitful source of Latin American ill-will may be removed.

Third, the Panama Canal. "I took the Canal Zone," boasted Theodore Roosevelt. The whole story of the fomented rebellion in Panama, of our quick recognition of the new republic, and of the enterprising way in which we rushed the Canal to completion, will not soon be forgotten in Colombia or elsewhere in Latin America. Grant, if we will, that the Canal was needed, and that we could best build it; grant that the work was carried through with efficiency and economy; there are certain by-products which have gone far to prevent the fulfilment of any genuine Pan Americanism. We mortally hurt Colombia, for we had aided Panama in revolt. We created a subservient state in Panama, whose economic dependence and political ser-

vility mark her as little more than a colony of the United States. The Canal built, we were moved irresistibly to protect it by a new policy in the Caribbean. That sea became in the political economy of the twentieth century our American Mediterranean. It goes far toward explaining the zeal which we have shown in protecting Haitians against their misgovernment, policing the Dominicans, buying the Virgin Islands, holding tight to Puerto Rico, and, until 1934, refusing to relinquish our stranglehold on Cuba.

The Panama Canal is a gash in the American body politic. It still bleeds. Until we find some way of atoning for the injustice committed, and until we devise a new definition of our rights in the Canal, which will provide some genuine sense of sharing that Canal with the other American nations, the Panama Canal will prove an obstacle to any genuine *rapprochement* between the Americas.

Fourth, trade barriers. When the delegates of all but one of the American republics assembled in Montevideo in December, 1933, general agreement was manifest that it is idle to talk of inter-American accord unless economic questions are faced. Until ways are found whereby the artificial barriers to interchange are lowered, the talk of accord will inevitably result in nothing sound or secure. The presiding officer of the Conference, the President of Uruguay, threw down the gauntlet by referring to "the lamentable results of the Smoot-Hawley tariff." He and the other delegates found in Cordell Hull a sympathetic listener, for the consuming passion of Mr. Hull is the conviction that most of the world's present ills are to be ex-

plained in terms of the walls which have been reared to prevent the free exchange of goods. Argentina and Mexico were especially insistent that economic questions be faced. The proposal which evoked the most genuine enthusiasm, in spite of its indefinite character, was that of Mr. Hull. He proposed the lowering of high customs duties through the negotiation of bilateral or multilateral reciprocity treaties; the elimination of those duties which "almost completely exclude international competition, such as those which restrict the importation of particular commodities to less than three to five per cent of domestic consumption," or those "which have been in effect for a considerable period of time without having brought about domestic production equal to fifteen per cent of the total domestic consumption thereof"; the continuation of the unconditional most-favored-nation clause; and the establishment of a permanent international agency to compile and circulate information concerning the progress achieved in reducing trade barriers. Mr. Hull's proposal was hailed as significant, not because of any definite promise which he could make, but because it marked a definite change in attitude on the part of the United States. It meant to Latin America that the United States was now ready to talk realistically. Five years before, the Argentine delegation had brought a similar proposal to the Sixth Pan American Conference, and it had been unceremoniously buried by Charles Evans Hughes. Montevideo marked a change of front, and the delegates from the Latin American republics took heart.

Mr. Hull, as Secretary of State, has busied himself since

the Conference in giving substance to the hope expressed in Montevideo. The reciprocal trade agreements with Cuba and Brazil offer the most tangible proofs of the reality of our national good intentions. A half-dozen other agreements are pending. Mr. Hull will need the cordial support of believers in inter-American cooperation if he is to carry these measures against the pressure of the powerful lobbies of special interests. If he wins in this all-important area, it will go far towards clearing the way for a more inclusive plan for inter-American economic planning.

Fifth, international loans. American investors have burnt fingers. There are over \$5,000,000,000 worth of carefully engraved paper in the safety deposit boxes of American citizens. Payments on interest and principal are in default on many of these issues. Many of these loans will never be repaid in full. Now is an excellent time to prepare for the day when these experiences will be forgotten, and we set out again to finance the operations of Latin America.

This is the simple fact: International loans often imperil international understanding. The record of our investments in the Caribbean area and Central America is clear. We invested money; we installed our collectors; we sent marines to enforce the collection. Further, we invested money in South America. We are not sending marines to collect these debts, but the harm is done. The South Americans will not soon forget the salesmanship which forced loans upon them. The commission of almost \$500,000 which the New York bankers paid the son of President Leguía of Peru is only one among other incidents.

It has been the policy of our State Department to pass, in a left-handed sort of way, upon these international loans. It does not approve loans, but it gives out a ukase as to whether or not any objections are to be raised. This policy must be re-examined. We are clearly moving toward the principle that an investor—or a gambler—must take his own risks, whether he does his investing—or gambling—in South Chicago real estate, U. S. Steel common, or a Peruvian lightning-rod company. The old argument can no longer be sustained: I invest my money in a dubious risk; I demand higher interest rates because of that risk; then I eliminate the risk by insisting that the navy of the United States shall guarantee my investment.

If we of the United States accept the new principle, it will go far toward setting at peace the fears of Mexicans, Cubans, Haitians, and all others who have suffered our interference.

Sixth, intervention. It was a happy day for the new Pan Americanism when President Franklin D. Roosevelt announced, on December 28, 1933, that "the definite policy of the United States from now on is one opposed to armed intervention." With these words he confirmed the words of his Secretary of State, Mr. Hull, in Montevideo, and he met the most obstinate and unanimous demand of all the Latin American peoples. If President Roosevelt proves true to this conviction, no matter what the tests may be, he will have carried the United States a long way toward reassuring the other Americas of our desire for a genuine inter-American cordiality. Severe tests may come. The Cuban

situation, in particular, is fraught with grave dangers. What will we do if communist disorders increase, and a state of virtual anarchy is precipitated?

The time is ripe to find the substitute for intervention. It is urged that situations might arise, in one of the weaker and less competent republics, where outside nations cannot stand idly by. It is a dangerous principle to accept, and it may be argued that every people is entitled to find its way through whatever revolutionary experience may befall. But if there is to be intervention, it might be possible to contrive a plan under which several powers might share the responsibility. This is one of the questions which confront the makers of inter-American policy.

Seventh, the policy of recognition. The United States has, during recent years, made her recognition of Latin American governments contingent upon her approval of those governments. We have, from time to time, disciplined Mexico, Cuba, Nicaragua, and other republics by the simple device of withholding recognition. The withholding of recognition is tantamount to inviting rebellion. It constitutes intervention of the most insidious sort. If we are to abandon intervention, we must at the same time rewrite our policy of recognition. We might well take our lead from Mexico, whose official stand on recognition is called the Estrada Doctrine, after Genaro Estrada, recently Minister of Foreign Affairs. Mexico recognizes *de facto* governments without raising questions as to their legitimacy. Mexico recognized Grau San Martín of Cuba in 1933; the United States withheld recognition, and thereby destroyed

a government which, for all its faults, was probably more representative of the Cuban people than any since that of Estrada Palma. Let the United States follow Mexico's example, and recognize governments as they emerge, rather than upon the exceedingly treacherous basis of approval.

Eighth, the peace machinery of the Americas. There is plenty of it written down in the books of the twenty-one American republics. There are the Gondra Conciliation Treaty of 1923, the Pan American Arbitration and Conciliation Treaties of 1929, and the Argentine Anti-War Pact of 1933. Thanks to the impetus given the peace movement by Mr. Cordell Hull, Mr. Saavedra Lamas of Argentina, and others at Montevideo, a concerted movement for the ratification of these pacts has assured the adherence of virtually all the republics. More, the Kellogg-Briand Pact has been signed by sixteen American states, and fifteen American republics are members of the League of Nations. There is plenty of machinery, and no lack of resolutions. But the fight in the Chaco goes on nonetheless. There is a gigantic Christ in the snow of the Andes, but Argentina and Chile eye each other with suspicion, and buy much gunpowder from our arms merchants. The peace machinery is to be preserved and strengthened; but the conviction grows that all of the peace machinery will prove futile unless the will to peace shall come; and the further conviction grows that most of the animosities are rooted in trade rivalries, and that the surest path toward peace is through an ordered international economy.

Ninth, an effective instrument of Pan Americanism. The

Pan American Union represents in tangible form the substance of hope. It is the deposit of an aspiration. Its graceful building houses men and women who are doing many useful things against decided odds. But it is not yet the instrument of an effective Pan Americanism. In justice to the Union, it must be said that no agency can represent that which does not exist. There is no generous and nationwide enthusiasm for inter-American cooperation and spiritual unity which can in justice be called Pan Americanism; there cannot, as a corollary, be any genuine Pan American Union. The Union is, moreover, loaded down with unnecessary handicaps. Its location in Washington is one of them. It is geographically and symbolically, in the back yard of the White House, the State Department, and the War Department. It is dominated by Washington. The personnel of its governing board is heavy with officialdom: ambassadors and ministers who, with rare exceptions, were picked for their caution rather than their imagination. Its officers, forced to keep a wary eye on the men in power in Washington, Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, Lima, and Santiago, tend to lose themselves in the sad business of rescuing whatever sparks of comfort may survive the cold waters of this accumulated officialdom.

The hope persists that a more effective Pan American Union can be contrived, more genuinely representative, more flexible, entrusted with more powers. There seems little chance of this hope being realized until greater reality has been given to the whole Pan American faith. It is one of the things about which we shall have to talk, and for

which we must work, if Pan Americanism is to be rescued from its low estate.

Tenth, the rôle of the State Department of the United States. Here is the crux of the whole matter as far as the duty of the United States is concerned. Here are the men to whom is entrusted the task of contriving ways of cultivating peaceful and mutually serviceable relations with the nations of the Americas. The question of the sort of relations we will bear to the twenty Latin American countries very largely resolves itself to the sort of men who occupy a few dozen posts in the Department of State: twenty ambassadors and ministers, the Secretary of State, the Assistant Secretary of State for Latin America, the chiefs of the Latin America and Mexican divisions. These are the men who determine policies and establish the atmosphere in which these policies are carried out.

The front line of our peace defense is in the embassies and legations. It would be pleasant to record that ambassadors and ministers are picked because of their special knowledge of Spanish and Portuguese life and culture, that a valiant effort is made to find men who can speak the languages of these peoples without stammering, men who by temperament and education are equipped to meet the leaders of Latin America on their own cultural level, possessed by enthusiasm and understanding of the gifts and graces of these alien traditions. It is painful to report that they are usually picked on other grounds. They are picked by the chairman of the Democratic National Committee (or the Republican) because they gave money to the winning

party's war-chest. They are picked because they knew Postmaster Farley or Postmaster Brown in the good old days. They are picked because their wives have money, and can pay the lighting bills of palaces bought in the days when the dollar was made of gold. Once in a while a man is picked because he is sympathetic, intelligent, and able. These exceptions furnish faint ground for hope that some day an American president may extend the principle, and pick men because of their fitness to serve the cause of inter-American understanding. Here is one place where those who seek to hasten the day of a genuine inter-American movement can help: by bringing to bear the demand of public opinion upon the President for the appointment of the men best equipped to lead. No president, no political party, has the moral right to use offices upon which so much depends for the future of the hemisphere for the paying of political debts.

The same principle must prevail in Washington. The men in the State Department who shape our relations with Latin America must be picked because of their peculiar competence in that area. It must be more than intellectual competence. They should be men who know the mind and the psychology of the Latin American peoples. Some such have served, and serve today, in the Department of State, but they are few. Our policies with Latin America are too often committed to men who lack these fundamental qualifications.

Pan Americanism owes much to the present Secretary of State, Cordell Hull. No man has served in that post who

has captured the respect and the liking of the Latin Americans to the degree that is true of Mr. Hull. His record at the Seventh Pan American Conference in Montevideo gave him a preeminent place of leadership in the Pan American movement. Candid, kindly, he made friends wherever he moved; earnest in his desire for peace, and untiring in his efforts to find a way of resolving the Chaco deadlock, he convinced all that the representative of the United States was dominated by no selfish motive; clear-headed and convincing in his analysis of the fundamental economic roots of inter-American understanding, he went far toward persuading Latin America that the United States no longer takes the intransigent attitude which has for years made impossible any realistic approach to understanding. He gave substance to the Pan American dream, and helped to make his own statement true, that "a better state of feeling among the neighbor nations of North and Central and South America exists today than at any time within a generation."

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